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# Outreach For Understanding

A Report on Intercultural Seminars



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# Outreach For Understanding

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A report of the intercultural seminar program  
conducted in Toronto between 1973 and 1975

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## Contents

Foreword .....	5
Introduction .....	7
Part 1: The Multicultural Debate .....	9
Part 2: The Black Community .....	21
Part 3: The Portuguese .....	37
Part 4: The Chinese Communities .....	47
Part 5: The Greeks .....	61
Part 6: The East Indians .....	71
Part 7: The Italians .....	81
Part 8: The "Reverse" Workshop .....	91
Part 9: Outreach for understanding .....	103
Part 10: Evaluation of the Seminars .....	107
Appendix: Guidelines for conducting intercultural seminars .....	111
Intercultural Exchange Committee .....	125



# Foreword

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Multiculturalism is one of the major contemporary issues in Canadian society. The passion and soul-searching that the debate engenders becomes understandable when it is recognized that the concept, in all its vagueness, touches the very roots of the composition of Canadian society and the development of a sense of national identity. In promulgating the theory of a multicultural Canada, one is saying such things as: This country should no longer be regarded as the country of its two founding races — with grudging recognition of the role of a third and fourth, the Indian and Inuit, its original inhabitants; that the values and lifestyles which Italian and German, African and Asian, West Indian and Greek bring to Canada will not only be tolerated or regarded as the plumage of rare exotic birds — they fascinate, but will, in some fashion, be integrally interwoven into the fabric of Canadian society.

In other words, although Canada has grown from Indian, Inuit, French and British roots, and although these roots have stood firm in the past, the new Canada — the Canada of the 21st century — will be a replica of the world with its many peoples, values, life styles and tongues. Its new branches and roots will be fused into a nation called Canada and a people labelled Canadian.

But this prospect is utopian, and several stages of development have to be passed through before such a society evolves. One of the stages — and it is at this point, in my view, that Canada currently stands — is that of co-existence where, on soil that was developed by two founding races over the past few centuries, the “newer” values and traditions — Ukrainian, Greek, Jewish, Afro-Caribbean, East Indian and Chinese — are allowed to exist.

But there is a world of difference between co-existence by sufferance and fostering by positive and direct action. All of the rhetoric of the multicultural reality of Canada will be meaningless unless decisions are made as to the extent to which co-existence of sub-cultural traditions, values, etc., will be public social policy, and beyond that, to which the active promotion of the new and alien strands will be undertaken.

The purpose of this report is to tell of the work of the Intercultural Exchange Committee, a group of volunteers, which has attempted to do something to bridge the gap between the founding races and the “newcomers.” This is a straight-

forward report and not a complex analytical study. It is not a government statement. It tells how the committee came about, who its members are, and what it has done. But more than that, the report brings together a number of papers presented at seminars sponsored by the committee. It has not been easy to decide which papers to include since there were so many which were very informative and well-written.

A word about the format. The seminars or workshops on which the report is based consisted of formal papers, panel discussions and question-and-answer plenary sessions. Some papers were submitted to us at the end of the workshops; some people spoke extemporaneously; some sessions were taped in full or, when the equipment failed to function, in part. Thus the report is a synthesis of the available data.

In some cases a paper is presented almost completely and credit is given the author. In other cases, I have tried to present a composite picture from what knowledgeable people of the community said. Since this is a descriptive document and not an analytical one, one person's judgment must determine what is relevant here. Thus, the point is *not how many persons say* that the Portuguese mother feels that the schools teach her children "bad" things, that the Chinese, an industrious people, cannot quite accept our "play" approach to education, or that Greeks view time differently from Canadians, but in my judgment, that such statements made by a knowledgeable Portuguese, Chinese, or Greek person give us fascinating insights into the cultural differences with which those persons who deliver any type of social services have to contend.

A number of people have contributed to the success of these seminars and to making the writing of this book possible. As usual the acknowledgement of one's debt becomes extremely difficult if all those who helped are to be listed. But the stellar work of the staff of the Multicultural Development Branch of the Ministry of Culture and Recreation, the encouragement of Mr. Frank Moritsugu, the former director of the Citizenship Bureau, and the exchange of ideas with my colleagues of the Intercultural Exchange Committee and the many participants in our workshops as we attempted an outreach for understanding are the significant factors for which my gratitude must be expressed.

George W. Bancroft,  
September, 1976.

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# Introduction

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Multiculturalism, or the presence in our society of diverse cultural backgrounds, is a fact of life. It encompasses all elements of society. It demands not only from government but from all segments of the community a steadfast commitment in furthering and enhancing the qualities of Ontario's cultural diversity.

The work performed by the Intercultural Exchange Committee is a good example of this commitment on the part of a group of volunteers. Working in co-operation with members of my staff and under the able and inspiring Chairmanship of Professor George W. Bancroft, of the Faculty of Education, University of Toronto, the committee over the past three years has endeavored to come to grips with the challenge through the intercultural seminar project.

We share with the members of the Committee an over-riding concern for a society whereby a multitude of existing cultures can function harmoniously side by side. If we are to have a society that fully reflects the multicultural character of our community life in an atmosphere of mutual understanding and acceptance, it is incumbent upon all of us to work toward this goal. It is our hope that this publication will serve to inspire other groups and organizations in the community to pursue these objectives.

We thank the members of the Intercultural Exchange Committee for their valuable contribution in making the project such a success.

Philippe LeBlanc  
Director  
Multicultural Development Branch



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## The multicultural debate

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Both the provincial and the federal governments have promulgated the doctrine of the multicultural society in Canada. One provincial publication, the 1974 *Annual Report of the Ontario Advisory Council on Multiculturalism*, sees the multicultural society as one “in which different cultures are brought closer together, benefiting from contact with each other.” The Council members believe:

- That the association of races with each other enhances the contribution each can make to the other — a belief which equates multiculturalism and multiracialism.
- That the many philosophies of life that each cultural group expresses, will enrich each other *when brought into contact with one another*.
- That the “melting pot” concept of a society would produce a bland mixture in which undue emphasis would be placed on conformity.

And they see the following as the objectives to be pursued through a policy of multiculturalism:

- The encouraging of each ethnocultural group to develop to its maximum potential its religious, cultural and spiritual values.
- The encouraging of each ethnocultural group in our society to learn as much as possible about the spiritual and cultural values of all other groups.
- The encouraging of an “inter-sharing” of specific cultural values among the groups.

The credo which the Council expresses and the objectives formulated are impressive, but several serious questions have to be faced before rhetoric can be translated into praxis. For instance, the credo implies that multiculturalism is equivalent to multiracialism. Yet it is conceivable that one racial group can have markedly different cultural expressions if for example, the world of one group is the rural reality, and that of the other the urban existence. By the same token, it is possible to have several racial groups sharing the same culture, as in many areas of the Caribbean. East Indians, Africans, Chinese, and Anglo-Saxons, for instance, all see themselves as Jamaicans. So the question arises: What consequences follow if multiculturalism is equated with multiracialism? What consequences if it is not?

The Advisory Council advocates that ethnocultural communities should have the opportunity to develop their cultural and linguistic identity. This means that the ethnic solidarity of each group should be encouraged. And there is merit in this recommendation, but two disturbing questions arise: Is ethnic solidarity consistent

with the current high rate of geographical mobility? Secondly, is ethnic solidarity not contradictory of multiculturalism since the former implies the exclusion of those who are not of the same ethnic background?

Perhaps the difficulty with the concept is best illustrated by considering side-by-side recommendations and statements which the members of the report make on multiculturalism. On the one hand, the council recommends that the state ensure that "every group will have the right, and will be encouraged, to pursue its own language and cultural identity." On the other hand, the Council praises "the recognition by the Ontario Government that this province is bilingual and multicultural." But as anthropologists have pointed out, the significant component in culture is language, and if each group works for the survival of its language and cultural superiority the Ontario government will have to recognize a *multilingual* and multicultural society in Ontario.

One of the reasons why there is some difficulty in defining clearly what the multicultural society is like, or should be like in Canada has to do with the models or metaphors used to describe this country and the United States of America — the country with which comparisons are always made. The models are the "melting pot" and the "mosaic." The Council rejects the former as appropriate for Canada because they believe that "the 'melting-pot' concept of a society would produce a bland mixture in which undue emphasis would be placed on conformity." There is much that is wrong with the statement — not as a belief, for one is entitled to believe anything — but as fact. There is nothing to say that the mixture produced in the melting pot would be bland. Mixture, yes. Bland, no, or not necessarily. Indeed, something uniquely vibrant may very well emerge. If we shift the model a bit from melting pot to goulash, anyone will tell you that the latter is far from bland.

The Council believes also that undue emphasis will be placed on conformity. What the Council ignores is the fact that we already live in the age of the faceless mass man, in North America at least. We look alike, eat alike, and talk alike thanks to Coca-Cola, television, and the standardized packing both of our disposable goods and ourselves. So to say that the melting pot will emphasize conformity, implying thereby that it will bring it into existence, is to err. There is already a severe loss of individuality in our society.

While the Council does not say so, it is often felt that Canadians should reject the model of the melting-pot because it is American. Incipient Canadian national pride is as much the reason for rejecting the Yankee melting pot and advocating the maple leaf mosaic. Where the rejectors of the melting pot err is in failing to recognize that the United States was never a melting pot society. More than a decade ago, Glazer and Moynihan in *Beyond the Melting Pot* argued that the



notion of “the intense and unprecedented mixture of ethnics and religious groups in American life [blending] into a homogeneous end product has outlived its usefulness and also its credibility.”

There has always been a disinclination on the part of third and fourth generation descendants of immigrants to blend into a uniform natural type. Anyone who has visited large metropolitan centres such as New York and Chicago knows that various racial groups live in their own subcultural enclaves and celebrate their own national days — the Italian Columbus Day, the Irish St. Patrick’s. In short, marked subcultural groupings *do* persist in the United States and that country is more a mosaic than a melting pot. The thought strikes one that, if the *U.S.* were really a melting pot, the “ethnic” vote would not be the powerful political factor it is today.

If, then, the model of the melting pot is rejected for Canada, for whatever reason, what can be said about that of the mosaic? Does it merely mean that our Canadian society is made up of a number of subcultural groups? This is so painfully obvious as to be almost trite in the stating.

But there are two significant components in a mosaic that need to be provided for: the ground, and the design formed. For some Canadians, the “ground” consists of the two founding races or the charter groups as they are euphemistically called. But surely the Indians and the Inuit *must* be considered among the founders of this nation, for it was upon their skills that the French and Anglo-Saxons built. Setting that significant issue aside for the moment, one is still in difficulty as an attempt is made to delve further into the concept of two founding races.

They are the French and the Anglo-Saxons, and presumably the matter rests there. But it cannot, because a significant French element see themselves or feel that they are seen, not as *Canadians* who are of French culture, but as French people living in an Anglo-Saxon nation (or society) or on Anglo-Saxon land whereon they are grudgingly permitted to lease territory.

And it could be argued that many Anglo-Saxons either consciously or unconsciously support the French in this view, for they really do not see the French as “equally chartered.” As one of my students put it, when she thinks of that which is Canada, she thinks of that which is Anglo-Saxon.

But the problem of the two founding races is complicated still further by the debate that occurs over the Anglo-Saxon component. True, the debate is not loud, but many people from Britain, as became evident at the final workshop in this series of the Intercultural Committee, take issue with the Englishman, the real Anglo-

Saxon, being singled out and identified with the founding of Canada. What of the major role of the Scots, the Irish, and to a lesser degree the Welsh?

So far, we have tried to argue that the concept of the two founding races as the “ground” on which the Canadian mosaic is formed contains elements of imprecise thinking. The imprecision increases when we consider the second major component of the definition of a mosaic, namely, the design that emerges as the “bits of colored marble or glass” are put together. These bits of marble or glass are long lines of immigrant groups from countries other than France and Great Britain — Germany, the Netherlands, Finland, Italy, Japan, China, the West Indies, India and so on.

In the past many of these groups accepted that being in Canada was a second-class, non-charter privilege. The increased percentage of non-French and non-British stock currently in the Canadian population and the enunciation of governmental policies of multiculturalism, have made immigrants more vocal. They desire not only to maintain their cultural heritage but demand that something be done by the government and other public institutions to foster its preservation. And so the Greeks are asking that their language and culture form part of the curriculum in the public schools in those neighborhoods where the Greek citizens predominate. So do the Chinese, the Ukrainians and the Italians.

At one of the workshops, an East Indian lawyer from the Caribbean recommended that an Indian language such as Hindi be taught in the schools under similar conditions. In a sense, he was justified in thinking along such lines as anyone would be who reads that the Advisory Council on Multiculturalism believes that: “Every ethnocultural community has the right to work for the survival of its cultural heritage and its ancestral language . . . [and] the Government of Ontario has a responsibility to establish policies and programs which will provide equality of opportunity to ethnocultural communities and help ensure their cultural and linguistic survival and development.”

Now the difficult question arises: Wherein lies that which can be labelled “Canadian” and “Mosaic”? Is it in the fortuitous juxtaposition of ethnocultural elements on a “ground” whose validity some might question? Is it in the bedrock of Anglo-Saxonism in all places except the French “territories”? Or in an amalgam of these two fused and tempered in prairie heat and tundra cold, with the colored bits of marble and glass lending an exotic touch — and no more?

Immigrants to Canada are currently being confronted with a “Green Paper” (interesting to note how the theme of color runs through the social reality of the country). This raises questions about the extent to which Canada, a more mature, lively, and outward-looking nation, thanks to post World War II immigration, can

“adjust to a pace of population change that entails novel and distinctive features” brought by those who came not through the traditional European flows but on the crest of black and brown waves from Asia and the Caribbean. And as ever so many letters to the editors of the newspapers show, there is concern because “these people are not learning Canadian ways.”

On the other hand, what are Canadian ways? Need immigrants accept a pre-formed definition?

In its credo the Advisory Council rejects the notion of the melting pot and accepts the mosaic. But what this means is obviously not easy to enunciate. It might be that the emerging Canadian identity will be formed from the two models whereby subcultural cells could be clearly distinguished but, at the meeting points of two or more cells, a blend with a new subcultural reality emerges.

Migration is usually thought of as an economic and demographic phenomenon. This point of view is incomplete for it does not take into account the large field of intercultural relations. In fact, due to international migration many relations between the cultures of different countries are established.

These relations tend to fall into three categories:

- The adaptation of migrants to the cultural environment into which they have been introduced.
- The influence on the cultural environment of the receiving country and the modification of some of its features by the migrants.
- The repercussion experienced by the cultural environment of the country of departure.

For all migrants, the departure means a cultural uprooting. Whether permanent or temporary, migration is a separation and a disassociation from the cultural environment.

But this separation could become a liberation, if the immigrant finds himself in a culture technologically more advanced than his own. Many lead an existence in which they are slaves of their environment, unable to leave the surroundings in which they are condemned to live. Usually the departure is spontaneous and voluntary since the migrant wishes to advance socially, to obtain an education or to practise the profession of his choice, for which there may be no opportunities in his own country. In these cases, social advancement is the aim of the migrant and, for those who think about and prepare for this separation, migration is a very favorable step. The migrant is readily disposed to adapt himself to a new way of life. But from the time of his arrival, he must realize the reality of the ties of dependence and solidarity with his new cultural environment. Successful integration into the

cultural environment of the receiving country requires clear thinking. Intelligent action.

If the migrant is not prepared for this experience, the psychological shock could be harmful to him. The problems which must be taken into account are so complex that he risks being overwhelmed by them. It cannot be repeated often enough that only an extensive human, cultural, and spiritual preparation can spare him disappointment and failure. This preparation, however, cannot be acquired at the last moment, but must be the result of mature reflection.

On August 4, 1962, Pope John gave the following advice to social workers concerned with migration from Italy: "Emigration is essentially a human affair of vast proportions, the protagonists of which are men and women, that is to say, real persons, each having his own will and his problems; persons capable of great sacrifices in order to attain a more favorable economic situation, ready for all environmental adaptations and cultural assimilations, according to the plan of Providence. Emigration can be considered as a process which supplies living energies that should arrive unimpaired and ready in the countries which receive them. Every effort must be made to give the emigrant appropriate religious, cultural and technical preparation. That is what they ask for: a constant and co-ordinated effort to provide the desirable preparation which enables an essential integration in the new residence."

The receiving cultural environment can benefit from this cultural exchange. Migration brings to the environment of the receiving country a human and cultural enrichment. The migrants bring the traditional customs of their native country and often cultural innovations unknown in the new country.

The cultural enrichment of the receiving country takes two forms: a communal form, that is, the influence on the cultural community, and an individual form, that is, the particular contribution of the intellectual, the technician or the artist to a particular cultural field in the new country.

Immigrant communities make an effective contribution to Canadian society. The contribution is noticeable more rapidly in certain cases than in others, but it is indisputable. In the beginning, the immigrants have a very strong tendency to create or maintain an autonomous cultural life. Through this tendency the positive values of another culture are accepted by a receiving environment. The result is favorable for the culture of both the host and the sending countries.

To get this result, the receiving country must not present a closed door to foreigners, and the migrant must be treated with respect, that is to say, on an equal footing with other members of the community. For a communal and fraternal



spirit to develop, it is not enough that men live together and tolerate the immigrant. They must live in friendship and understanding. Only by living in a spirit of fraternal reciprocity will they be able together to advance socially and culturally and both make contributions to cultural values. Migrants must not be treated as displaced persons or usurpers of the acquired rights of others.

Again we cite the words of Pope John: "The arrival of the migrant requires an attitude of cordial welcome and of comprehension on the part of the receiving country without egotistic pretensions or unjustified suspicion but with an implicit acknowledgement of an equality of dignity and of the fundamental rights of the human person."

As for the second form of influence on the cultural environment of the receiving country, individual migrants can make considerable cultural contributions by their scientific, artistic, musical, and other contributions. As an example we can mention Karel Ancerl of the Toronto Symphony. Many migrants have founded cultural organizations in Canada and brought their personal contribution to the arts, in music and painting.

Thoughtfully organized, migration movements not only prevent cultural impoverishment of the country of origin, but actually bring it a cultural enrichment. When the movements are rational, they create a current of exchange, of collaboration, and of mutual aid between the communities. They establish a constructive dialogue and a renewal. The community of departure can therefore be culturally and socially enriched through these exchanges.

A principal strategy of the Greek policy of migration today is the sending of Greek workers to the industrial countries of Europe, such as Germany and Switzerland, to learn new methods of production. When Greek migrants return to their native land they are able to introduce in their country the innovations and methods they have learned. Thus they are a factor of social and cultural progress in their community.

If the community in the departure country looks at migration movements in a spirit of solidarity and as a cultural radiation, and keeps in close touch with those emigrants, a close rapport can be established between the two cultures which can be solidified by reciprocal relationships, occasional returns and permanent exchanges.

The problems which face organizations working with immigrants as they change cultural environments by the migrants are obvious.

For the migrants themselves to gain a cultural enrichment, they should be helped to

adapt to the new environment by a thorough preparation before departure, that is, through orientation courses, especially in language. Knowledge of the language of the receiving country is a primary requisite if the migration is to serve as a bridge between two distinct cultures. It enables the migrants to come into direct contact with the new culture and to recognize its positive aspects. Anything that will accelerate this adaptation and make it easier should not be neglected.

For the cultural enrichment of the receiving country, the principal needs for intercultural exchange are especially in the following areas:

- Organization to welcome and receive the new arrivals.
- Publication of newspapers, radio and television programs in the native language of the migrants so that the change is not too rapid a break, but rather a progressive adaptation.
- The fastest possible reunion of families, since the cultural adaptation of the migrant is achieved through the intermediary of the children in schools and the parents in contact with neighbors.
- Establishment of day schools in English and French for the immigrant parents and children of pre-school age.
- Establishment of strong and active liaison among all government departments dealing with new Canadians and citizen groups interested in their integration. These groups should be officially recognized by the government and regular meetings should be held with the governmental departments concerned to ensure a co-ordinated and orderly plan of united endeavor.
- Education of the migrant for his naturalization.

The complex consequences of a shift from biculturalism to multiculturalism, and the impact of migration on culture point to the need for workers serving the ethnocultural communities to reach out to understand their clients and, in a two-way fashion, their clients to reach out to understand them. It was to meet this need that the Intercultural Exchange Committee was formed and, for two years, ran a series of workshops in ethnic neighborhoods.

In the spring of 1973, Mr. Khim Tan, a consultant with the Citizenship Bureau, then a part of the Ministry of Community and Social Services, telephoned about 25 people and invited them to a meeting in the Mowat Block of the provincial government buildings at Queen's Park in Toronto. Those invited came from a wide range of agencies and backgrounds and represented only themselves. They were an *ad hoc* group and they were brought together to try to find out what could or might be done about the fast-changing multicultural reality of Toronto.

The group did not want to make its focus the sort of goodwill activity reflected by the churches on Brotherhood Sundays, significant and valuable though such activities are. It wanted, instead, to pursue a professional route. All of the

members had worked or were working directly or indirectly with immigrants or subcultural groups. They wanted to bring their professional expertise to bear on the multicultural reality, and it seemed to them that the best thing they could do was to design programs that would facilitate the training of people who worked in multicultural spheres.

The difference between the “goodwill” approach and the “training” one is sufficiently important to warrant further comment. Goodwill events are geared to the concept of “learning to accept” people of other cultures, or religious or ethnic groups. Actually a number of people have been brought up to learn to accept people whether as friends or whatever. That is why the phrase “Many of my best friends are Jews or Negroes or Indians” is meaningless. It is quite possible to have friends among such groups and yet be anti-Semitic, anti-Black or anti-Indian deep in one’s heart. So the “goodwill” approach, valuable though it may be, may not get at fundamental attitudes and antipathies.

What is needed instead, or in addition, is to *train* people to become more sensitive to multicultural realities. The best solution is not necessarily the one which is easiest for the Canadian bureaucracy.

Can professionals who come up against fundamental cultural differences be trained to use imagination and sensitivity? Can one provide for varying sub-cultural patterns by changing official practices, for instance the ways of recording family data on forms or dress regulations in certain jobs?

If multiculturalism is to become a reality, the Canadian system should *accommodate* itself to encompass new practices.

There is a crying need to develop some sort of program whereby workers may better deliver services to the multicultural communities. In attempting to meet this need, the committee and the Citizenship Bureau decided to organize a series of neighborhood intercultural seminars in which “the main objective . . . was to develop among members of the receiving society an awareness of the background culture of a specific ethnic group living in a neighborhood.” This objective was based on a conviction that although “for many years there had been programs designed to orient the newcomer to Canadian society, integration is a two-way process and programs should be attempted which would orient the receiving society to the cultures of the newcomers and at the same time provide for meaningful dialogue between the host and the immigrant groups.”

Certain specific features of these neighborhood seminars should be noted.

- Each seminar dealt with one subcultural group, the reason being that a sharper

focus on cultural differences could be developed, than if several were considered at the same time.

- The workshop would be located in an identifiable ethnic neighborhood, for example, the West Indian Blacks in the St. Clair-Vaughan Road neighborhood of Toronto, the Portuguese in the Ossington-Dundas district.
- Professional workers from a wide range of services would be brought together in the one setting. Thus teachers would interact with police, the unemployment insurance officers with the health people — in the consideration of a given sub-cultural reality, for example the Greeks. A fair proportion of “resource persons” from the ethnic group would attend.
- Seminars would be held during the week. The reasoning here was that if an employer was willing to release a worker to attend such a seminar “on company time,” it was an index of that employer’s recognition of the importance of such a venture.
- The format would not be particularly complex. Someone would present a paper that gave an overview of the given culture. Another person would talk about how the group came to be in Canada.
- Then four or five people would speak specifically on themes chosen ahead of time — *e.g.* education, the law, old age — in small workshop groups. An “ethnic” meal would be shared by the participants.

In practice not all themes were found to be of equal relevance to the communities. These differences only lend emphasis to the fact that each group has its own sub-cultural peculiarities in this social complex that is Ontario. A multicultural society may be defined as one in which there are several subcultural groups predominantly different racially, or religiously, or socio-economically.

By their very nature, prejudice, bigotry, and social friction are inherent in the multicultural reality unless or until such time as conscious attempts are made to eliminate them and to produce the “desired” social complex in which the negative forces of bias and bigotry are checked in a harmoniously functioning organism based on cultural differences. Probably all of the current talk on multiculturalism in Ontario is an attempt to bring about such a society.

In my view, the multicultural society in Canada means that everyone has a chance to be oneself, to become the person that one wants to become. Of course the ethnic ties that one develops in youth will go a long way to shaping the individual. But this shaping will take place differently. Some persons will be deeply rooted in their ethnocultural past through disposition, accident of birth into a family or a subcommunity that opts for or values the cultural heritage. Others will be less so, again, because of disposition or accident of birth.



In the truly multicultural society, neither the one nor the other is preferred type — they will both exist. In other words there will be people of Russian or Latvian heritage who transfer to this land the deepest spiritual treasures of Russia or Latvia and preserve them here in much the same way as the Jews take with them and preserve wherever they go, the Torah and the Talmud. At the same time there will be those who, international or cosmopolitan by inclination, will opt for a new lifestyle and leave the old practices and allegiances — “leave” them and not “reject” them. There is a marked difference between the terms.

And this new lifestyle and the new self it produces need not be the popular Anglo-Canadian image. For example, if an Italian or a Guyanese listens to the serious music programs on the FM stations, who is to say that he is “going Anglo”? And that his “proper” preference, by another’s definition, should be the “O Sole Mio” or the calypso of his heritage? The key term here is “by another’s definition,” instead of by his own choice.

When we talk about the multicultural society in Canada, we talk of the culturally pluralistic society in which that which forms the common core or cement is no longer merely Anglo-Saxon or Gallic, valuable though these have been in the past, but something called Canadian produced from the womb of a land whose sweep Morley Callaghan terms “majestic.” We have a land of great dreams, fostered by an “atmosphere” that recognizes that while a historic debt (as Arnold Edinborough points out) is owed to the Indian, French and British, what now exists — this current common core — is not a pale imitation of these, but a new growth to which the term Canadian applies. So that one says with pride “I am a citizen of Canada, I am Canadian. My origins are Guyanese, or Dutch or Irish, but I am now Canadian. And into this well of Canadianism from which I dip, flow the waters of many worlds — and I drink of them all in their new blend.”

The first workshop held was for the Blacks, most of whom are West Indian. In the St. Clair-Vaughan Road area which, until less than a decade ago was a pre-dominantly Italian neighborhood abutting wealthy Jewish and settled Anglo-Saxon communities of small apartment buildings and staid tudor homes, a vibrant Black population has now settled.

The main reasons for choosing the Blacks for the first workshop were these. They represent the largest of the new subcultural groups to enter the social system in significant numbers. And despite the popularity of Belafonte’s calypso records, or frequent winter trips to Jamaica and Barbados, Canadians knew little or nothing of the culture of these newcomers who form a significant component in the Canadian social complex.

In the neighborhood is the Harriet Tubman Centre — a YMCA unit run by Blacks.

It is *not* a Black YMCA. It is named after the famous American slave who was responsible for leading so many fellow slaves to freedom in Canada via the Underground Railroad. The centre has a significant presence in the neighborhood and so it was chosen as the venue of the conference.

Some of the papers presented are reprinted here.

The first deals with the past Black experience in Toronto and the West Indies, implications of present experience and some characteristics of the Black family. Stanley S. Grizzle of the Ontario Labor Board, a worker of more than 40 years experience with the Black community is the author.

## PART 2

# The Black community

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### AN OVERVIEW: Stanley S. Grizzle

I note that the purpose of this first of the seminar series is “to acquaint persons, particularly professionals whose clientele includes immigrants, with background culture and adjustment problems of specific ethnic groups.” This seems to me to be a very timely program.

The fact that this first seminar involves the Black community is an indication that whoever conceived the idea of these seminars recognizes that persons of “high visibility” have the most difficulty adjusting to the prejudices that exist in a white majority society.

A couple of weeks ago, I read in the *Toronto Star* a review by Robert Fulford of W. O. Mitchell’s book *The Vanishing Point*. His opening statements were: “One of the great moral prohibitions of our time is directed against frank talk about race. Every period in history has its self-imposed secrets, those thoughts and feelings we can’t bear to state openly. Race seems a particularly striking one. People of previous eras, if they could examine our time, would point this out as a genuine oddity. In the past half century, race and sex have changed places in our public conversation, one of them disappearing while the other has surfaced. In the 1920s people in Canada said more or less what they thought about race. If they didn’t like this or that for some reason, they said so, but they rarely expressed themselves honestly about sex. In the 1970s, on the other hand, most people feel free to talk about sex, but race is a forbidden subject. If you don’t like the members of some race, you express yourself only in private, if at all. To state racial prejudice openly is to reveal yourself as a cultural freak. Most people would rather be accused of homosexuality than racism.”

No history of Black people can be written or spoken without discussing their struggles against the forces of prejudice and discrimination.

An Overview of the Black Community in Toronto is the topic I have been asked to discuss with you. Black people have lived in this area, now called Toronto, since about 1790. They came here both as freedmen seeking a better life and as slaves from the United States of America. In the 18th century, there were just a few hundred slaves in Canada. In 1793, the first parliament of Ontario passed “An Act to Prevent the Further Introduction of Slaves and to Limit the Term of Forced

Servitude within this Province.” This legislation remained in force until 1834 when slavery was abolished in all parts of the British Empire.

Records reveal that negroes served this country “very acceptably” in every war to which Canada sent troops.

In the 1820s and 1830s, with an increase in abolitionist activities, escaped slaves and Black freedmen from the United States entered Toronto in more significant numbers. W. R. Abbott, born in Richmond, Virginia, in 1801, came to Toronto in 1835 because he was tired of the lack of real freedom — the reason many U.S. Blacks have come to Canada. Abbott’s story is fascinating. It is sufficient to say that he became a successful real estate owner, tobacco shop operator, and politician, serving St. Patrick’s ward as an alderman. He died in 1876.

In 1837, at least 50 families of refugees settled in Toronto, mostly from Virginia. They worked as barbers, waiters, cooks and house servants.

The oldest Negro institution in the city today is the First Baptist Church founded in 1826. It has been in several locations, but now stands at Huron and D’Arcy streets. Between 1838 and 1847 several other churches were founded including the African Methodist Episcopal Church which had a membership of 128 in 1851.

In 1851 a historic conference was held in Toronto in St. Lawrence Hall by the North American Convention of Colored Freedmen. It drew delegates from the northern United States and from England. At this conference it was decided to make Canada the centre of anti-slavery activity. Among the convention leaders were Josiah Henson, the central figure of Uncle Tom’s Cabin story, and one H. C. Bibb.

In the period 1864-65, the City Directory showed a population of 141 negroes made up of 57 laborers, 60 skilled tradesmen (including 10 waiters), 4 restaurateurs, 2 tavern owners, a minister, and a law student. There were also Black newspapers in the 19th century. All in all there appeared to be a vibrant Black community in the early days.

Many Blacks drifted back across the border in the latter part of the 1800s after the abolition of slavery in the United States. This was an early manifestation of a feeling among Blacks that, in the final analysis, greater opportunity existed in the United States.

The Black population of Canada in the 1911 census was 16,994. By 1927 the Toronto Black population was some 3,000 compared with some 80,000 to 100,000 today. The estimates vary widely.



I recall asking my mother many years ago why she decided to leave Jamaica and come to Canada and she replied: “Dem seh money grow pon tree in Canada.” Translated this meant: “They say that money grows on trees in Canada.”

My father, also Jamaican-born, and my mother were married in Toronto around 1917. They raised seven children of whom I, born 1918, was the eldest. Thus, I was a teenager in the famous depression years of the 1920s. But the depression was not felt by local Blacks.

Jobless, arrears in rent, and scarcity of food and clothing were the norm for us since Blacks were always the last hired and the first fired. It is said that 90 per cent of Blacks had no regular employment. We were so poor we did not have any cockroaches!

In those days public places such as skating rinks and dance halls were closed to Blacks. There were no laws against discrimination. When I was growing up I never saw a Black teacher in school, a Black policeman, a Black politician, a Black fireman, a Black secretary, a Black nurse, a Black store clerk or cashier, a Black civil servant, or a Black union official. There were a couple of barbers, one doctor, and one lawyer. No matter what his educational level, a Black man ended up on the railroad as a sleeping car porter.

In those days we were regularly referred to as “nigger,” “darker,” “coon,” “colored,” “negro,” but never Black. Black was distasteful because it had connotations of being colonials, powerless, weak, and evil. And Black mythology said — and still does for some people — that Blacks smelled bad and were oversexed. That’s a hell of a combination! And this oversexed thing always bothered me because I could never figure out how we could be oversexed and still a minority! Now, with the many dependent African governments whose heads of state are all Black, Blackness has taken on a more positive aura and respectability. Now Black is the “in thing.”

From the early 1900s the Black populace in Toronto concentrated in the area bounded by Front, Bloor, Dovercourt, and Sherbourne Streets. This was partly because the railroad station was at Front and Bay Streets. It was handy for the porters and those who hoped to become porters to commute to and from work, and readily accessible for those applying for work.

Now, with a much larger population, greater job and housing opportunities, and somewhat healthier racial attitudes, Blacks have spread into every corner of Metro Toronto.

Being the eldest child, I quit high school and went to work doing odd jobs such as

shopping, washing and waxing floors, and delivering newspapers for the Black elite — the porters and their wives! In 1940 the Canadian Pacific Railway Company hired me as a sleeping car porter at about \$75 a month for which I worked up to 400 hours. On this job, I found many American and West Indian born Blacks with good education. Some were university graduates who could find no other job and thus made beds and shined shoes for a living. I found these world travelers and men of wisdom highly literate, well-informed, and inspiring. Incidentally, I have yet to see a Black train engineer, fireman, or train conductor in Canada.

In 1943, the Canadian Pacific Railway Company porters joined the International Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, AFL-CIO, CLC. Until this time, porters had absolutely no rights which the CPR felt bound to respect. The Sleeping Car Porters' Union, led by the veteran Black labor leader, A. Philip Randolph, gave the porter job security for the first time, reduced his work hours, increased his wages and, above all, gave him some dignity.

If you check the convention proceedings of the Black Sleeping Car Porters' Union, you will find resolutions passed at successive conventions of the union urging federal, state, and provincial governments to enact Fair Employment Practices legislation outlawing discrimination in jobs on the basis of color, race, national origin, creed, or ancestry. In 1953, Canada's national government passed the Canada Fair Employment Practices into law. The new law was couched in the exact language used in the resolutions of the Sleeping Car Porters' Union. Thus, this is the gift of the porters to Canada and to the United States of America!

Of course we didn't do it alone. We joined hands and hearts with other community groups in agitating for this legislation.

As president of the local union, I took to church pulpits, radio, television, and the press, teaching and preaching. I spoke out against minstrel shows, derogatory stories in schoolbooks, and racism in Canada's immigration policies, in jobs, and in housing.

Because of increasing complaints about Blacks being refused jobs and accommodation, we joined other labor, civic, church, and similar groups in a 1956 deputation to the Ontario cabinet urging the enactment of strong anti-discrimination laws. They were passed shortly thereafter.

The laws did not wipe out prejudice or its twin, discrimination, but they helped to bring this community sickness to the surface. More than ever before, they brought the matter up for public debate and discussion. The laws were administered by the Ontario Human Rights Commission — one of the finest anywhere. The

Commission has done a fairly good educational job, especially with Dr. Daniel Hill, its first executive director, at the helm.

In my opinion — which I am sure you share — immigration from places such as the West Indies, United States, Asia, and Europe has been good for all of us, the Canadian-born as well as the immigrant. We have grown tremendously as individuals as a result of our new contacts and new experiences. The differing life-styles as seen in foods, dress, and entertainment; the range in shades of skin; the variety of facial features; the musical accents and the discovery of new places to spend vacations — all have made life more beautiful for the Canadian-born. Immigration has underscored for us the fact that peoples of different parts of the world have more in common than their differences suggest. We suffer the same aches and pains for the same reasons and we share the same hopes and aspirations.

But what about today's Toronto Black community which is made up of so many different cultural backgrounds? What of our problems? Here are a few observations:

**On education:** There is a fear that Black students are being misdirected into vocational or trade schools by teachers and guidance counsellors, thus building up a lower income class in our community. It is also felt that too little is being done to make students aware of the contributions made by Blacks to social progress in Canada and the rest of the world.

**On employment:** Discrimination in employment is by no means solved. Aside from hiring practices, there is a strong feeling that Blacks are not being promoted on the job in accordance with their experience and qualifications — either in private industry, federal and provincial government services, or educational institutions. However, it should be observed at this juncture that the Ontario Government is by far the best employer in the country.

**On health and welfare:** More storefront information centres are needed. More information should be available, on drug use for example. People should be able to find out what their rights are. For example, how many people know that below a certain income tax level, they are not required to pay OHIP premiums.

**On the law:** My own experience has convinced me that no profession or institution in this country is free from racism or bigotry, and police departments are no exception. Many allegations of racist and rough handling by police have been heard. To some extent, Black citizens working with community relations police officers seem to have made some improvement in the situation.

**On the human rights code:** New techniques and approaches have to be thought of

for getting the public to obey both the letter and spirit of the Human Rights Code. Too many persons are refusing to come forward and file a complaint. Solutions for this problem will have to be found. A recent Ontario Government-sponsored business mission to South Africa has raised honest fears and almost panic in the hearts of many of us who suspect that the government is being inconsistent in its approach to its own human rights policies as reflected through the Code. The provincial government needs some sensitizing to the attitudes of Blacks and other people of goodwill on the question of putting money in the pockets of people who have a world-wide reputation for practising the most vicious forms of discrimination. The public policy which the government claims it espouses and its public acts of support for South Africa seem to reflect a state of racial schizophrenia.

**On the media:** Often the manner in which the official press reports the news is disturbing. For instance, there was a conspiracy of silence both editorially and in reporting the public statements of Blacks on our government's mission to South Africa. The whole situation could add up to a form of intimidation for those who would otherwise speak out on such critical moral issues. In addition, the public at large may be left with the false impression that all Blacks are in accord with the mission or else have no interest in the matter. They may think Blacks are too busy watching football on television or footpatting to soul music. The stereotype image again!

And so, my friends, I hope that I have given you some food for thought.

### **GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER: Anne-Marie Stewart**

*Miss Stewart, formerly a librarian with the Toronto Board of Education, is an immigrant from the West Indies.*

Before I begin, I want to make two things clear. First, the "West Indies" is a geographical, historical and political term of definition. I will use it when I'm talking about the location, history and settlement of the region. Once I get into the *sociology* of the region and I am talking about the people who live — and leave — there now, I cannot talk any longer about a great glob such as — "The West Indies and West Indians." For there are all sorts of critical differences which will arise having to do with the island of birth, race, color, and shade of complexion, class, and economic factors. Secondly, I'm going to talk about the people of the region in the third person; not because I want to set myself apart from my roots, but because I will find it easier to expose some things to you, as non-West Indians, if I depersonalize it in this way.

I have a friend in Trinidad, the kind of person the press tends to call "a young radical economist." Whenever I ask him about any contemporary problems in the West Indies, he becomes very ponderous and says: "Well, Anne-Marie, you've got



to go back to the ships.” He means the ships of Columbus. Even though each time he says it I become exasperated, he is making a very valid point. For, the problems that face the West Indians at home and abroad, the problems that make them decide to leave, and that don’t go away even *when* they leave, start there. With “the ships.”

Columbus arrived in the region. He didn’t discover it. There were lots of Arawak and Carib Indians there when he arrived. He set in motion a whole pattern of colonization and exploitation in which the major imperial forces — British, French, Spanish, Dutch — took part. During the 18th and 19th centuries these powers squabbled, fought over, captured, ceded, and traded these islands to each other.

The West Indies were desirable treasure troves. Sugar was a high-priced commodity, and it grew there. Plantation societies developed there. Millions of Africans were taken there as slaves. Other people, from all over the world, went there — East Indians, Chinese, Syrians, Dutch, English, French, Spanish, Irish, Scots, Germans. They were masters, slaves, political dissenters, criminals, fugitives from justice, utopian dreamers, entrepreneurs of every persuasion. There was very little emigration, lots of immigration.

The problems that grew in these polyglot societies have never gone away. All sorts of power structures and dependency blocs were set up. The regions were governed from abroad. Naturally, rich people were in control of poor people. The rich people were white people, and the poor people were Black people, originally African slaves. Later they were joined by indentured East Indians. Although by the beginning of this century there were other racial mixtures among the West Indians, the poor in the West Indies have continued to be largely of African descent. So, even after the abolition of slavery, and the recent creation of nation states like Guyana, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, and Barbados, there are *still* in the West Indies large numbers of *poor Black people*. There are still some people who have too much control over too many things, and these are still white or “white-ish” people. And there is a sizeable racially-mixed, middle-income class which values itself in terms of living according to European or North American life-styles. Economically and politically, they know all the different ways of keeping the poor and Black people in their place.

I’m not going to say very much about the multiracial, middle-class people from the West Indies who come to Canada. They fit into this society quite easily and from all reports, they just *love* it here. I’m going to talk about the lower income people, whose dreams can scarcely hope to be fulfilled in the West Indies.

These people want to live as they see the West Indian middle class living. That is to

say, as North America dictates — big cars, color televisions, split-level homes, and lots of appliances. These people need to make money so that opportunities may open to them and their children. They want to have options, not only in the material quality of life, but also in acquiring skills or professions. They want to be able to give their children an education. They believe this will ensure better lives for them, so they will never know what it is like not to be “white” and to be poor.

Up to 1964 these West Indians were still British subjects and went mainly to England. Canada only took students and professionals. In England they filled jobs that English people didn’t like to do. But in 1964, Great Britain began introducing more stringent and some openly racist immigration laws. Gradually, these laws not only closed off Britain as a land of opportunity for West Indian migrants, but also contributed to the development of rank hostility to non-whites there. At the same time, Canada gradually started to relax its immigration policy toward West Indians, and to encourage others besides students and professionals. For in this country too there were jobs that Canadians didn’t want to do. Thousands of West Indians — men, women and families, skilled, semi-skilled and non-skilled — arrived as landed immigrants. Some came direct from the West Indies and some via Great Britain. Within the past year, Canada’s immigration policy has changed again. But that is not my story.

Now the first thing you have to get straight about these people is that *on the surface* their heritage is very little different from that of the Canadian WASP. In the West Indies the major colonizing force was British, and even though there are regional dialects, English is the first language. The contemporary dominant popular culture is North American. This is unloaded onto the society by foreign-owned and foreign-oriented advertising using canned television — The Cartwrights, Mannix, Lucy, and their friends — and D-grade American movies. So that the *aspirations* of the West Indians tend to differ little from those of this society.

Where then, do the problems arise?

First, color or race, whatever you choose to call it. These people are *not* white. Even though the definition “Black” no longer seems to upset anybody, and Canadians may think themselves very “with it” and liberal to call them Black, the term has connoted the negative attributes of blackness. A great deal of their self-esteem is based on the denial of characteristics which, in almost all the islands, are inextricably linked with their people’s social and economic situation — the subtle gradations of skin shade, embarrassment about skin, hair, nose and lips. So you will find that older West Indians who came here to “better themselves” have spent all their lives struggling to achieve, in spite of being Black, and think that associating too much with other Black people can do *no* good. They are at total variance with the new breed of Black who wears an Afro and seems to be militantly

proud of being Black. They are also at variance with the Black who prefers the company of other Black “brothers and sisters,” and who behaves as if he is in Canada just for a change of scenery.

On the other hand because they are not white (whether they would prefer to be or not) they are up against a wall of misunderstanding and prejudice in this country, whether it is intended or not. And it doesn’t take West Indians too long to discover this. I want to deal briefly with the kinds of defences they erect to protect their dignity and self-esteem.

I was quite surprised one day last week to discover that the Canadians I have lunch with interpret the bland stare and reticence of Sheila, the West Indian lady who serves us in the cafeteria, as sullenness. When one of my colleagues asked me why Sheila was like that, I laughed and said maybe she is feeling cold. And they marveled at how I laugh so much, just like “those happy people we met in Barbados” last April! You see, “island people” laugh a lot!

Here I’ll say a little about stereotypes. I’ll get back to Sheila afterwards. Despite popular belief, there is no West Indian stereotype. Island stereotypes are perhaps perceivable. Let me give you some idea of the Jamaican and Trinidadian personalities and say briefly what might have formed them.

Among West Indians, Jamaicans are usually known to be serious people. The island has a fairly rigid class system. It was a British colony for 300 years. People of African descent form the largest percentage of the population. There are very few other races and mixtures. The predominant religion is Protestant. Jamaica is the largest island in the British West Indies (three times as big as Trinidad, which comes next in size) and it has a large, stable, rural, peasant population. These factors have made the typical Jamaican immigrant a conservative, proud person who believes in the goodness of education, hard work, and God. In 1955, long before nationalism had percolated to the southern Caribbean, the Jamaican government was sloganizing “Be Jamaican. Buy Jamaican.” Jamaica is the most northern of the islands, and only within the last 15 years has Jamaica looked southward to the other islands for regional co-operation.

Trinidad is furthest south of the islands. Trinidadians think Jamaicans are funny “ha-ha” people and they say so whether Jamaicans are within earshot or not. At various times in Trinidad’s history, it has been owned and settled by the English, the Spanish, and the French — this before the present *de facto* colonialism of the United States and Canada. The dominant religion is Roman Catholic. The people are of every possible race and color imaginable. These qualities combine to produce a rather cosmopolitan person, who tends to overstate his capabilities rather than put them to the test. Trinidadians are proud of their natural resources

— oil, asphalt, and Carnival. They're not lazy, but they don't strive too hard. History has taught them that there are all sorts of variables that come together in Trinidad to conspire against achievement — race, color, shade, education, money, politics, who their fathers were not, and, even at the ends of their lives, an implacable Roman Catholic God.

But to get back to Sheila. We left off at the happy island laughter. Somebody then asked: "If Sheila doesn't like the cold why does she stay here?" The speaker went on to say that if she herself were from the islands, she certainly wouldn't be here.

Another asked what I was doing here when the islands needed trained people so badly that all those wonderful CUSO people have to go out there!

For this occasion, I will offer some speculative answers to the questions they have raised.

Sheila may, like so many West Indian women who now live in Canada, have a child. She may or may not be married. Let us assume she is not married, and that she's from Trinidad. Even though not being married is no big social crime in the West Indies (in fact there is a good deal of stable common law marriage), a marriage morality is imposed by the church. Because the social morals that stem from this are enforced by the middle class, it is unlikely that Sheila would ever get the break that she dreams of for her child were she to stay on that little island. In addition there are very few job opportunities for an unskilled woman and there are tens of thousands of these in the West Indies. There are even fewer opportunities for training. These are the kinds of considerations which would make Sheila decide to get out.

Or we can assume that Sheila is from Jamaica and has a husband. He left Jamaica in the late 50s for England, promising Sheila he'd send for her. In England he trained to be a welder, made good money, and sent some home for Sheila and their daughter. When racism emerged in London, he came to Canada and his family joined him here. He feels less uncomfortable in Toronto, he says. It's cleaner, there's central heating, and higher wages are possible. Of course even though he is a highly skilled welder, he has had frustrating problems with "Canadian experience and certification." He still isn't doing the kind of work a man of his experience and training should be doing. However, would they own the house they now do, if they had stayed in Jamaica? And would their daughter be going to university next year to study medicine?

Their daughter — it is very likely that they are already having problems with her. This may well be the reason for Sheila's baleful look at the young men and women who chatter their way past her in the cafeteria. West Indian parents are stern and



authoritarian. When faced with North American permissiveness, they tend to become unrelentingly strict. So there may be infinitely more to Sheila's apparent sullenness than the Canadian cold and the happy island people!

My time is limited. However, there *is* one other situation I feel I should mention. It is one that all West Indians know so well that I would be dishonest to call it a speculation. It is the alienation, isolation and anonymity that almost every West Indian feels in a country like Canada. The West Indian, rich or poor, from Jamaica to Trinidad to Guyana, from the towns or from the country districts, is accustomed to the interdependence of the extended family and to every day being a summer's day. For no matter how extreme the poverty, there still is in the West Indies a closeness of community life. There is a lack of the kind of stress that is generated in a society where people are cramped into high-rise boxes, their days dominated by the whims of the weather, and their lives driven by an unquestioned work ethic.

How does an immigrant, Sheila for example, begin to explain this to somebody ostensibly there to help her? Even as she searches for words to explain herself, somebody will likely say: "I beg your pardon?!" Communication is a difficult thing when unspoken assumptions on either side are so ingrained.

I hope I have given you some kind of framework into which you may fit issues and questions that will arise. I am well aware that I still haven't speculated about why I'm here and why those CUSO people are there. Maybe somebody will do it for me later.

## **THE WEST INDIAN IMMIGRANT CHILD — ISSUES IN ADAPTATION: G. DaCosta, M.D.**

*Dr. DaCosta is Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto, and staff psychiatrist at the Clarke Institute of Psychiatry.*

The social, psychological, and intellectual development of immigrant children is affected by a variety of factors that are either qualitatively or quantitatively different from those that existed in their former culture.

In some immigrant populations, the patterns of child rearing, family systems, ethnic traditions, and racial derivation present the child with experiences that may distort his development in a number of ways. Certain features of development may be accelerated, while in other ways the orderly adaptation of the child to life in a new society may be inhibited.

I will discuss some particular issues relevant to the West Indian child in general terms. These issues should be considered in the context of the fact that the children involved were not representative of the immigrant population. They had been

referred to a child guidance facility after it became clear they were having trouble in various aspects of the acculturation process.

Almost all the children I speak of are from families of the lower socio-economic and educational strata of West Indian societies. Almost all are basically of African descent with varying amounts of European and Asian blood. All have been in Canada for less than 13 years. As is characteristic of the poorer West Indian immigrants, most of the parents lived in Canada for some years before the arrival of the children completed the family unit.

Categorizing people according to race is as basic to any society as other norms and attitudes. Children seem able to acquire racial preferences even before they can classify people into racial groups. These attitudes are evident as early as the pre-school years and show some rigidity by about Grade Two or Three.

Less educated people seem to have more rudimentary racial classifications. One tends to evaluate others in terms of one's own needs. Children's ethnic perceptions are related to their own self-image, which is in turn a function of their psychological development, the child-rearing patterns and mores of their family, and the social milieu.

The West Indian child, no matter what his racial makeup, is well acquainted early in life with a complex hierarchy of status, privilege, and power that is specifically related to gradations of skin color and physical features. Historically the ideal image is a stereotypical Caucasian model. In their own culture the children have usually found their position on the ladder of racial preference and self-esteem.

When they arrive in a predominantly white society, this intricate and exquisitely-woven sense of self comes up against a redefinition. In Canada, it seems, one is simply black or white. Gone are the gradations of dark, brown, and fair. This can create an identity crisis for some children. In a white society the relative shade of skin color, shape of nose, and straightness of hair hold little if any social currency. Attempts at adjustment are also hampered by the negative reception the host society offers to the racially different.

The effects depend on the age and psychological development of the child. They may take any of the following forms: outright denial of the skin color, avoidance of West Indian peers and other minority groups, preoccupation with wishes of being white, various forms of rejection of their relatives, behavior ranging from withdrawal and passiveness to aggression and hyperactivity. An older child may take to more positive adaptive techniques, such as an enhanced sense of blackness, assertiveness, and an interest in the historical and cultural aspects of black civilizations.

Some children, however, cannot negotiate this process without an overzealous affirmation of their racial status associated in its initial stages with anti-white attitudes. This can create a lot of conflict and aggressive behavior in 10 to 12 year-old boys, particularly with peers and sibs. Such militant behavior often has an external group-bonding function, and internally is a source of hope and resolution in the identity process.

Adolescents may find constructive adaptive activities in ethnic school-based projects. The presence of West Indian or Black adult models who are visibly successful in this society is important. Most of the available models are Black athletes and entertainers as represented in the media. An interesting aspect of this modeling behavior may be observed in the language conflict that can affect children of any age. In the space of a few months, they may adopt a stylized Black American language pattern with virtually no trace of their original dialect accent.

Two significant issues in the acculturation process are child-rearing practices and the family system. Children are expected to contribute to the business of running the home from an early age. Girls work in the house and are discouraged from assertive and independent behavior. They are expected to restrict their social life, especially with the opposite sex. Boys are given fewer household responsibilities as they grow older, and do not suffer the same sanctions against sexual experimentation and independent activity. Games are sex-typed and tend to be indoor activities when the children grow older.

Children are often raised by surrogate parents and may be shifted back and forth between them and their biological parents at various times. About three out of four births are illegitimate. The family unit is centred on the mother with loose, extended kinship system. The father plays an inconsistent and discontinuous role. As a result, children tend to value mothers more positively than fathers, who are mainly assessed in terms of their capacity to provide for the family.

The children see that less is expected of their Canadian-born peers who are more oriented to leisure activities. This brings them into conflict with their parents, and between the ages of 8 and 12 some boys and a few girls will wander a good deal, run away, or simply avoid the home. They show increased assertiveness, less formality with their parents and other adults, and a tendency toward disobedience to all authority figures. As such behavior runs counter to the values of their parents it may lead to repressive discipline, physical punishment, and parental resistance to "Canadian ways."

Biological parents may precede their children to Canada by several years. They may marry strangers to their children, before they send for them. Children may be born into the new union before those left behind arrive. When they come, their

parents are virtual strangers to them, and they have usually been uprooted without any psychological preparation. The family units that are thus brought together in Canada are without the support of older relatives.

All this is naturally a grave source of stress. About 60 per cent of the children who come to the attention of professionals are depressed, but because inhibited behavior is expected toward parents and teachers, depression in pre-adolescent children often goes unrecognized.

Much of the depression we see stems from mourning for the loss of their surrogate parents and friends in the West Indies. Parents tend to view this reaction as provocative, ungrateful, and selfish behavior. They have worked hard to achieve a contented family unit and want their children to recognize their efforts to give them a new and better life.

Depression is also often associated with difficulties at school. The parents' own needs do not allow them to see the child's problems, except as an unwillingness to grasp the educational opportunities before them, or as an inability on the part of the school to cope with the child. They tend to blame the surrogate parents with whom they left the children for the behavior that characterizes this adjustment process. This often further alienates the child and prevents him from transferring his loyalties.

The reunion presents particular difficulties to children who arrive in their teens, having grown up apart from their parents. Many can never develop a child-parent relationship with their parents and tend to relate on a peer level, which never works too well. Usually a fairly good relationship develops with the new siblings, if only because they find in each other support in disputes with the parents. Some do not feel the normal taboos against incestuous behavior that are characteristic of a nuclear family, and there may be dramatic sexual behavior toward parents and siblings. This is extremely disturbing, but is fortunately usually transient. Sometimes the stability of the marriage hinges on the removal of the newcomer to some other living arrangement.

Another source of parental and marital stress is the changed role of women. Their new status as wage earners means they are no longer dependent on males for economic support, and as they are in Canada, they can no longer rely on their female relatives for child-rearing support. They tend to demand the establishment of legal nuclear families and equal shares in property. More important, the males are forced to adopt a different set of attitudes from the licence they traditionally had in determining the sexual roles of women.

In the West Indies, overcrowding and lack of privacy affect the process of the



development of a separate individuality, and various attitudes are used to manage the emotional distance between people.

Those who seek to help these families may feel puzzled and frustrated by an apparent obstinacy and "lack of communication" in settings where they expect candid exchanges. The command of language is sufficient for social intercourse, but breaks down when it comes to expressing and comprehending ideas.

In the home the child is expected to be quiet, not to question the brief commands and phrases of the adult. Less attention is paid to words than to the intent, and the presentation of complex or novel concepts often leads to withdrawal. Concepts about time, particularly the planning of sequential activities aiming at a deferred goal, are not easily learned.

In the home, play is of secondary importance to rules about quiet behavior, household tasks, and minimum demands on the adult. Parental involvement in play is not usual, and toys are seen as valuable objects to be treated carefully. Education is felt to be primarily the school's responsibility. Although a high premium is placed on it, economic pressures, irregular attendance, and a low level of parental investment in learning brings about a significant fallout rate by the age of 14.

The children do not move easily into the Toronto school systems. The academic difficulties that West Indian children face pose some thorny issues, especially in working with parents to facilitate the child's adaptation. In recent times efforts have been made to acquaint teachers with the cultural differences and heritage of minority groups. However, one undesirable side effect of this exposure has been the pessimism that arises from knowing the tremendous problems that many of these children have already had to contend with.

A sense of helplessness and inertia creeps into the teachers' aspirations. An additional facet is that some teachers are racially prejudiced. There is some evidence that increased personal interaction may tend to increase previously-held prejudices, although teaching tactics may be enhanced by knowledge of the child's culture.

These issues are highlights of some of the adaptive tasks West Indian children face. The fluidity and potential for development in children is intimately related to their situation as immigrants. The outcome in all its aspects — economic, social, and occupational — is contingent on a milieu which will foster a comfortable adaptation and acculturation.



## The Portuguese

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### THE PORTUGUESE FAMILY: Father Alexander Neves

*Father Neves is a priest in the parish of St. Helen*

This workshop was held in the parish hall of St. Helen's Roman Catholic Church on Dundas Street West in Toronto. The workshop took place in November, 1973 before the recent revolution in Portugal. Remarks on conditions there naturally refer to that era, the only Portugal most emigrants knew.

There are about 80,000 Portuguese in Metropolitan Toronto and its environs, an area that stretches as far as Midland in the North and Brampton and Brantford to the west. There is a large population in Cambridge. In Toronto itself, the Portuguese are concentrated in clearly-defined geographical communities in the inner city. The Kensington community is probably the best known to the public.

Most of the Portuguese who have settled in our cities come from villages in the Azores or on the mainland of Portugal. In emigrating, they, like many others, experience a drastic change as they go from the milieu of the small rural settlement "back home" to that of the massive complex of the North American city.

The family is the nucleus of society. It reflects and defines a people, a culture, a nation. Therefore a study and appreciation of the values of the proud Portuguese family will surely lead us to a wider and more complete view of the great Portuguese community living in the city of Toronto.

The Portuguese family, socially as well as religiously, is oriented to the Roman Catholic Church. The clergy have exerted great influence on the socio-religious life of the family, especially in the small villages and towns of rural Portugal. The well-meaning but sometimes inadequate orientation of these leaders has left its effects, both good and bad. Because the people were illiterate and ignorant (for which the nation's government is partially or totally to blame) various problems with socio-religious implications have arisen. These include lack of proper preparations for marriage, economic problems involved in the maintenance of an often large family, lack of information about sex and child-rearing, an over-rigid morality, and superstition.

Despite these problems the Portuguese family is still typified by its unity, and by the divine ideal of the indissolubility of marriage. The father is always considered the "head" of the family. Both wife and children owe him respect. He will do anything to preserve and maintain his family.

The Portuguese man is a man of work and action. Since the era of the great voyages of discovery he has always been considered a man of great ideals. Even though he may not always have had the social, technical, and professional skills he needs and which his government should have provided, he has mastered and absorbed human values, especially those of Christianity, and has possessed the will and spirit to make great conquests.

Today Portuguese families continue to emigrate because their country does not offer them the higher standards of living to which they aspire. The Portuguese are found in most of the five continents but particularly in North America. In the past 10 or 15 years the United States and Canada have received thousands of Portuguese families.

The Portuguese family finds great barriers in this country, especially when it first arrives. It faces the strange climate, different attitudes, a different way of life, and, worst of all, the ever-changing immigration laws. This, in particular, causes serious psychological effects, not only among the Portuguese but among other ethnic groups as well. Canadian immigration laws have a tremendous influence on the human condition. They seem to be in opposition to the socio-religious principles of the Latin family (Italian, Spanish, French, Portuguese and South American). For us, the unity of the family is an almost sacred principle. It is a natural and human necessity to have the physical and spiritual presence of all members of this nucleus of society under the same roof. But, because of certain immigration laws and the bureaucracy of the Immigration Department, thousands of families are being painfully separated. Husbands have left their wives, children, friends, relatives and country. Portuguese teenagers have left their parents and country to escape military service.

These victims of our modern society are not understood as well as they should be. They emigrate to North America to look for a better life and better human conditions. But this change is painful. Hundreds, maybe thousands of men have been separated from their wives and children. Here they have stayed for three, four, five and even six years waiting for that dreamed-of decision of the immigration officials to give them landed immigrant status. Without it they cannot go to visit their family. They feel if they do, the chances of returning to the country are none, as they would never pass the immigration desk. This idea frightens them, so they wait year after year, for that small piece of paper.



To the majority of immigrants the price of that paper is not only separation from their loved ones but also tears and anguish. They suffer from exploitation by shady lawyers, and “immigration consultants” who are not above taking advantage of people already in debt, lonely, without knowledge of English and friendless. These people aspired to a fuller more meaningful life which they are entitled to as human beings. It has cost them much, and must be shared with their wives and their children in this land all people dream of as their home of tomorrow.

Thousands of Portuguese families who have come to this country had to sell all they possessed in Portugal, to pay their plane fare. Can you imagine how long a large family of seven, eight or 10 people has to work to pay for their fares on the instalment plan? When they arrive in Canada, they do not find it easy to rent a flat since Portuguese families are usually prolific and they cannot afford much. The answer is always the same: “You have too many children.” The father, already laden with debt, is practically forced to buy a house.

From then on the husband, wife and older children, who might still be at school, have to work. The 16 year-old has to look after his younger brothers and sisters so the mother can go to work to help her husband maintain the home and pay their debts.

Once they have a house they immediately bring their parents or in-laws from Portugal — with the full approval of the Immigration Department. Often within months or years the sponsors cannot take care of them any longer. Then the old couple must go on welfare or family benefits.

What about the children who attend school? They learn English and begin to integrate into the Canadian way of life. The parents do not have time to get together to discuss their problems or the problem of their children’s education, and still less, to attend English classes at night. Time is not the only factor. They come home tired and cannot find the strength to go to school. To make matters more difficult, some cannot even write or read in their own language, because it is only 20 years since the Portuguese government introduced compulsory education. I have been trying since last year to get permission to give an advanced English class in my television program.

Psychological problems within the family emerge when the parents can no longer understand their own children who become “Canadian” with new attitudes, a new way of life, new customs, friends of other nationalities who expect to “go steady” in the Canadian way. The parents cannot guide them appropriately in this new style of life, especially in problems regarding sex. This is a subject that is never talked about in the home. Traditionally, in Portugal, parents have a tendency to be over-protective toward their children, especially their daughters. Because of my

contact with children in schools and teenagers in my youth organization I have observed and lived through many dramas, which surely could be the theme for another talk.

The “why” of all this is quite simple. The parents were brought up in another era and with a different mentality.

Today, the Portuguese are concentrated mostly in one area. They work with Portuguese people. They speak only Portuguese with family and friends. Their doctor and their lawyer are Portuguese. They have Portuguese travel agencies, Portuguese priests, Portuguese stores, restaurants, bars, Portuguese radio and TV programs, Portuguese cinemas. In a sense many of them are still living in Portugal. Some Portuguese who have been here a long time cannot speak one sentence in English. The communication gap complicates the issue of conflicting values of parents and children. Parents do not understand their children’s attitudes. The situation is aggravated by the fact that they cannot express themselves because their children cannot fully understand the words that they say. Most of the children speak poorly or not at all in the Portuguese language.

Therefore, we frequently see clashes between parents and children. We see young boys and girls leaving home, marriages without adequate preparation, battered children, parents who ask for all their children’s wages at the end of the week, who don’t want their children to date Canadians, who don’t want their daughters to go to dances, parties or movies, or to go out with their boyfriends and girlfriends alone. Problems with work and problems with children can lead to clashes between husband and wife. The resulting coldness and misunderstanding may lead to separation and even Family Court.

How can we help them? That is a good question. Why can’t the schools try to get the parents together to instruct them, using the technical facilities available to them?

Immigration offices, government offices and hospitals have interpreters, but the problems are often more than linguistic. Why don’t they have Canadian people who have studied the Portuguese language and the psychology of the Portuguese people “in situ” so that they can better understand and help them? I was chaplain in a hospital for nearly a year. I could say many things about hospitals but my time is limited.

These people are the flock of the Catholic Church. What is it doing, through its bishops and priests, for the assistance of the immigrant family through sermons, radio, television and press?

It seems to me that it is only we, the immigrants, who are expected to understand you the Canadians, to adapt to your lifestyle and mentality. But you also have to think of the other side. You have to reach out, help, orient, and, at the same time, learn from us many positive human values which would help this society a great deal.

The Portuguese family is friendly, hospitable, and Christian. It is capable of doing anything to please you. It likes to be independent. It detests relying on welfare and accepts it only as a last resort.

Finally, I want to ask the Immigration Department, other government departments and organizations dealing with immigrants to dedicate themselves just a little more to the human ties and values of the newcomers. To try to understand better the good things which the immigrants have done for this country, from the humble Portuguese who cleans your office to the one who now works in Parliament for the development and integrity of human rights. We work with you for this Christian, democratic country, conscious of its destiny among nations both in today's world and that of tomorrow.

### **ADJUSTMENT PROBLEMS OF THE PORTUGUESE MOTHER: Fatima Perez**

*Fatima Perez is a secretary at the Portuguese Centre of St. Helen's Church.*

Most Portuguese immigrants come from rural areas. Coming to Canada is a great experience, especially for the mother, whose scope of life has usually been just her family and her home. You can see the drastic changes that await her in Canada. She has to adjust not only to a new country and language, but also to a completely new way of life, a city life which she has never known.

One of the first adjustments she has to make is not living in a place of her own. In Portugal she had a house. No matter how small or how poor, it was hers. Now, at least for the first few years, she has to live in a flat. This can be quite an ordeal. She is on the lookout 24 hours a day, seeing that the children don't make too much noise and disturb the owners of the house. I know of some mothers who have been brought to the verge of a nervous breakdown because of this.

Since the family's main objective when they get here is paying off their debts, if they have any, and owning a place of their own, the mother is practically forced to go to work. This is mostly cleaning or factory work. (Even if a woman has a trade or a degree, in nursing, for example, she won't find work in her area of specialization because of the language problem). This again is quite a change from Portugal where most mothers don't go out to work.

In Portugal the family was the centre of her world. She had time to hold it together,

Here in Canada when she gets home tired from work, she has to cook dinner, clean the house, do the laundry. That doesn't leave much time for her children.

As the children learn English and get on in school, she cannot follow their progress. She doesn't know English. She can't read or understand their reports or talk to their teachers. She has no idea of the program in school, nor understanding of the methods used. To a lot of Portuguese mothers, school seems to be a place where the children learn "bad things." At school they have sex education and it appears that they learn to practise it there too. This attitude is not too hard to understand when you stop to consider that this subject is never, never talked about in the home. Sometimes I wonder how Portuguese women ever have any children at all!

Most of the mother's problems are in parent-child relationships. The generation gap among the Portuguese is very wide. Most parents are still living 20 or 50 years ago in their small village. They have not adapted themselves to this new way of life. Most of their children are or feel like Canadians. The cultural clash is enormous. The parents want their children to remain Portuguese and the children want to break away.

It's very hard for the mother to understand or to accept many Canadian ideas, like dating, or going out at night. It's unthinkable for a girl to go out with her boyfriend without a chaperone. It's just not done.

In Portugal, the families of both the girl and the boy must sanction the courtship. For the first couple of years after boy meets girl and they decide to go steady, the boy is not allowed to go out with the girl, or even to enter her house. They talk—the girl from the window and the boy from outside on the street. They're lucky if she is allowed to use a window on the ground floor. Often she has to use one on the second floor.

Only after this has continued for some time will he be allowed into the house to ask for the hand of the girl and officially start their engagement. Now he may visit her — on the days designated by the father, and they can even go out sometimes — with a chaperone, of course.

You can see that this won't work here. The children won't go along with it. When they try to do what they see here, war starts.

The mother is usually the one who suffers most because she's caught between her husband and her children. She covers up for her daughters, even though she may be going completely against her own convictions. But in order to keep peace in the home, she lies to her husband because she knows what would happen if he found out his daughters were going out with boys. So she acts as a buffer.



You can see that most of the mother's problems are caused by the fact that she doesn't speak English and she holds on to her culture and traditions and doesn't easily let go. She is isolated with no source of entertainment but television. At least now there are some Portuguese programs she can watch. Father Alex has one.

How can we solve her problems? Maybe you have suggestions.

I know that there are many school principals here as well as other people working for the school board. I would like to ask you if the Metropolitan School Board or the Separate School Board have done anything to widen the Portuguese mother's understanding of what's going on in the schools.

I would like to ask all of you who come in contact with the Portuguese mother in your daily lives to be patient and try to keep in mind that she wants to understand, but in order to understand, she has to be understood.

## **PROBLEMS OF PORTUGUESE YOUTH**

*Based on a presentation by Ana-Maria Coelho, a teacher in the Cambridge school system.*

Adults are not the only ones who encounter difficulties in adjusting to new surroundings. The children in immigrant families are often the victims of frustration and anxiety. The hardest area of adjustment is often the school environment, and other problems may arise as a result. To help you understand why a Portuguese child may not adapt to the Canadian school system, I will give a brief description of the system in which he was reared.

In Portugal, the elementary school course lasts six years. Children begin at the age of seven, and attend eight hours a day (8.00 - 12.00 noon and 1.00 - 5.00 p.m.) six days a week, from the first of October until the end of June. There is no kindergarten. After elementary school, students may choose from three streams of education in secondary school as Canadians do — academic, commercial, and technical. But secondary education is not free in Portugal.

Until recently, on both the mainland and in the Azores, only members of the upper class could read and write fluently. Today, however, there is room for all in Portugal's public schools. Just recently the minimum educational program was expanded from four to six years.

As one may expect in an authoritarian country, the school system is highly structured and discipline is strict. Comparatively few students go on to secondary school, particularly in the Azores where a student might have to travel far from home. Many boys seek full-time employment at an early age. Girls are expected to

help at home once they have finished elementary school. This rigidity often creates, in many students, a feeling of resentment toward the system.

The total educational system is controlled from Lisbon and, unlike Canada, there is little or no provincial or local autonomy or community involvement in education.

Until recently, when they arrived in Canada, most children were thrust into the first grade with no consideration for their age. Often a child was academically and emotionally above that grade level. But acquisition of language was the sole criterion for placement.

This means of placement has since been altered. Today a child coming into the school is placed in a grade according to his age level. Very few who arrive after the age of 16 are registered in school, unless they were in a high school or trade school in Portugal.

Miss Coelho writes: When our family arrived in Canada in 1957, we were all placed in a separate school. My sister and I were placed in Grade One. This was fine since we had no educational experience behind us. However, my brother, who was 11 and in his last year of elementary school in the Azores, was placed in Grade Two. He became totally discouraged. The kids were coloring, adding and subtracting. He already knew how to write, to multiply and divide. Naturally he was disillusioned and bored. He was often the victim of the mischievous behavior of others and was penalized for it. However he struggled on. He was 21 when he graduated from high school. He is now thankful that he did continue, but he still recalls those days and often remarks how he felt like a shepherd with his herd of lambs around him. He made it, but many didn't.

Language is still the major drawback. Often Canadian schools are not staffed with teachers who can cope. Gradually, schools are recognizing the needs and are experimenting with special programs of remedial reading and special English classes twice a week. They are even considering conducting classes in Portuguese and introducing English gradually. However, a lack of qualified staff is impeding this proposal. The solutions may not be in this particular program, but at least the schools are making positive efforts to give these children equal opportunities to reach some goal in their lives.

School age immigrant Portuguese have special learning difficulties. They usually read below their grade level and are deficient in language usage and vocabulary. This is not their own fault. Quite often the teacher, without realizing it, is using vocabulary too advanced for the child to comprehend. He is forced to cope with new words and instruction at a pace which is too fast for him and strange subject

matter which his classmates know like the backs of their hands. His simplest solution is to give up.

Discipline is another major problem. The child finds himself freed from the highly-structured and strict classroom atmosphere. He proceeds to test this freedom. Often an inexperienced teacher is unprepared for this and the child becomes almost totally unmanageable. As a result he may be isolated from class activities and his peers. At this he rebels once more and the teacher may never regain his confidence. Then the parents are contacted and an interpreter explains the situation. The problem then becomes the parents' responsibility. The child often fears his parents will co-operate with the teacher.

Most Portuguese parents have spent less than four years in school. Most want to give their children the benefit of a future in a new land although their own outlook on life is traditional. What they often fail to realize is that this future may include assimilation into the Canadian way of life and a disregard for Portuguese tradition.

Consequently, the problem faced by the school is not only the teaching of a second language, but also a social and psychological one. The acquisition of English may inhibit proficiency in the child's native tongue, and he may then find himself in conflict with his home and community. This often presents a new problem for the child as he grows up. He becomes aware of how sheltered his home is from the outside world. He recognizes his commitments to the family but because his world revolves around two centres, the home and the school, he begins to regret his ties to the family. He yearns for the independence and self-image which the schools, in his view, foster. This often becomes the basis for a family split. The family does not recognize his desires and merely sees the child as being disrespectful to his family. The result is that he is quite often shunned not only by his family but by other Portuguese citizens of the community.

Today, officials are particularly concerned about the school drop-out problems among Portuguese children, particularly in urban centres such as Cambridge. They receive many requests for work permits for children between the ages of 14 and 16 even though often the child may be quite anxious to remain in school. The parents feel that his duty is to supplement the family's income. Children are expected to play a part in generating the family income and it is usually assumed that they will turn over their complete pay cheque until they plan to marry. The tragedy of it all is that some of the children withdrawn from school in this way are very ambitious and talented. Many are university material, but their whole future is jeopardized. Often this is not necessarily because of financial need but simply because the parents blindly and selfishly follow traditions. It is more important to the father to

have a large figure in his bankbook and material wealth, than to have scholarly children.

Consultation between the home and the school has been the main method of trying to overcome this problem, but it often proves unsuccessful. Children are highly valued in the Portuguese home. The child's loyalties are first to the home, and only then to school, work, and community. This means the child is often called upon to interpret for the parents at clinics, on shopping expeditions, with business and government offices. The child may often miss many days of school in order to accommodate his or her parents.

At home a great deal of responsibility is given to the girls since quite often the mother works. The oldest girl is expected to do the housework for the whole family and to take care of her brothers and sisters. These duties seriously interfere with school homework.

As the children become better educated than their parents and move more freely and comfortably in the new community, they adopt the dress, customs, and habits of the new country. Often the parents, who prefer the old ways, feel that their children are becoming strangers to them. Some parents try to force their children to maintain Portuguese traditions and mingle socially only with their own kind. The children, on their part, become rebellious, discard parental control and reject traditional standards of conduct.

The teacher working with immigrant youth must be continuously aware of the barriers and communication gaps which reinforce conflicts in the school and the home. The troubles faced by the newcomer and his family must be understood before effective assistance can be offered. An understanding of the ways in which the immigrant youth's background differs from that of his Canadian-born counterpart is an essential starting point for the development of such an awareness.

Many of the conflicts discussed may be resolved. Others will continue to exist for many decades to come. The young immigrant must either come to terms with them or revolt against them for his own peace of mind. As one who has been through this mill, I can honestly say that I cannot deduce any magic solution. As with every other issue in this world there must be a compromise somewhere.

But there is a spark of hope, for culture is not static. It is in a state of perpetual change. No matter how diligently a human group may seek lands which are precisely the same as those from which it came, success can only be partial. No piece of land is exactly the same as a second, any more than one man is the exact duplicate of another. Migrants make adjustments in their new environments, and in so doing create new values and attributes.



## The Chinese Communities

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### THE CHINESE: Wesley Lore

The history of Chinese in Canada is not a happy one. In the beginning, they came over from China by the hundreds as cheap labor to build the railroads out west. They planned to work hard, earn a fortune, and return rich to China. Unfortunately most did not return because fortunes were not to be made, only promises of fortunes. Yet these promises continued to draw Chinese to Canada.

Soon there were a great many Chinese on the West Coast. Many became tradesmen and went into business in competition with the non-Chinese population. This threat of too many Chinese, and the private sector's fear of the Chinese dominating the commercial markets, prompted the government to establish a royal commission. Its report led in 1886 to the imposition of a \$50 "head-tax" on each Chinese entering Canada, and the limiting of numbers to one Chinese per 50 tons of cargo imported.

These restrictions did not prove to be effective and by 1900 the Chinese population in Canada was approaching 20,000. The head tax was increased to \$100 in 1901 and to \$500 in 1904. Not surprisingly, at that level, the head tax was effective. To compound the trouble the Chinese became very efficient in the skilled trades and in commerce. This was seen as a threat by the non-Chinese private sector. Race riots broke out on the west coast of the continent, beginning in California and spreading to Vancouver. They resulted in much injury and complete destruction of the businesses and private property of the Chinese. Some local governments instituted laws prohibiting Chinese from working at trades or owning businesses in direct competition with the non-Chinese private sector. So Chinese were forced to take on menial work such as running laundries and restaurants.

However, the riots had one useful result. They drove a sector of the Chinese community to unite in an association to appeal to Ottawa for compensation for the damages incurred in the riots. They received \$100,000 but no change in the laws. Nevertheless, this united action was the first real step toward achieving political and social change to improve Chinese community life in Canada, although the climate did not allow much real change for many years.

Although the head tax proved effective in reducing immigration, Chinese were still

entering Canada. The federal government therefore devised a series of laws to prohibit immigration. The first of these was the Labor Exclusion Act of the early 1900s which only allowed Chinese immigrants to enter as students. In 1923, a bill was introduced limiting Chinese immigration into Canada to students and merchants. Later this law was revised to forbid all Chinese to enter Canada. Also, anyone who left Canada for more than a year for whatever reason, was not permitted to return.

The major consequence was that between 1924 and 1947 no Chinese were admitted into Canada. This was the only law ever enacted by a Canadian government to prohibit any one race from entering. Such a political and social climate could not help but create a Chinese community of a type very different from any other ethnic community.

The early Chinese communities in Canada were composed largely of men since wives and families were not permitted to immigrate. They were insular communities, based on distrust of a government wholly prejudiced against them and a society totally opposed to any improvement of their lot.

The Chinese, as you well know, traditionally hold a deep respect for authority. Thus they seldom questioned the actions of government, even unjust ones. Associations to change political and social attitudes did not exist. There were "Tongs" — secret or fraternal societies and family and village associations — but they were founded largely for socializing.

By 1947 the federal government was manifesting a more liberal attitude. Chinese were given citizenship and the right to vote. Wives and families (children under 18) were allowed to enter. Still, many restrictions and unnecessary hardships persisted.

Chinese benevolent associations sprang up to do something about the situation. They became more vocal after 1947 as Chinese were accepted by and into the Canadian mainstream. These were probably the first real associations to achieve some smattering of real social and political change. Equally important, they were instrumental in letting the non-Chinese population see more of what the Chinese community really was like.

For whereas the family associations or tongs tended to be very insular, benevolent associations with their political and social activity, although limited, brought the Chinese way of life to the Canadian public. They first petitioned Ottawa for more relaxed immigration laws, and later they began asking firmly for equal treatment.

In the late forties also, Chinese children began to study at universities and to enter

the business and commercial life of the wider Canadian society. Thus the community became more aware of its situation in this country. The Chinese began to realize that changes could be brought about fairly quickly by social and political action which they themselves could institute. Until then, their respect for authority, combined with authority's prejudice against them, had effectively curtailed any progress toward social betterment.

As the Chinese population itself became more accepted, it became obvious that more remained to be done. Now, associations are pushing for human rights, equal opportunities, and improved social institutions to serve the Chinese community in areas such as housing, old age homes, welfare and health services, and the preservation of Chinese culture. Furthermore, parents' associations are actively seeking changes within the school system — something unheard of in the past. They want public schools, particularly in the city core areas where there is a high percentage of Chinese children, to teach Chinese as a second language.

Perhaps we should look briefly now at a specific Chinese community, that of the city of Toronto. The residential community of Chinatown is located in and around the core of downtown Toronto. Its main business section of stores and restaurants run from Elizabeth Street to the Spadina-College-Dundas area. Its residents, now approaching 25,000, are concentrated in this same area and to the east in the Don Vale-Broadview-Pape district.

But the Chinese community was not always situated there. It started in the Sherbourne-Queen neighborhood, then moved to the York-Queen district. In the late 1940s and 50s it reached its greatest commercial and residential concentration in the Queen-Elizabeth-Dundas area.

It is the expansion of non-Chinese interest that has always forced the Chinese community to move. In the mid 1950s, the greatest blow to the downtown Chinese community came with the building of the new City Hall and civic centre and the expansion of the court house. Then, as earlier, the Chinese community accepted the move even though at times it received shoddy treatment from the municipal government. Eviction notices were delivered too close to the deadline date. Prices offered for houses were unquestionably low.

Now outlooks have changed and community associations are fighting back to preserve what is rightfully theirs. As young families are being raised and the social climate is improving, ethnocultural communities are becoming more open and interlocked. This process is good in many respects, but it is beginning to be seen as a threat to the Chinese cultural identity.

This threat has caused many younger people to form associations and groups to try

to preserve their heritage. They are seeing their culture not as something to be cherished because it is traditional, but because some of its outlooks and teaching are considered far better than many of those of the non-Chinese community, a rather practical attitude.

The younger people are now better educated — and this is very important. It means that they are not forced to scrape for a livelihood. They have time to evaluate the direction of their lives and establish their own priorities. When these priorities are threatened, they have the time and money to defend them. For instance, the Chinese Canadian Association was founded in the early 50s because of the fear that mainland Chinese participation in the Korean War might lead the Canadian government to establish internment camps such as those used to imprison Japanese Canadians during World War II. Similar associations are becoming involved in the schools, in health and welfare, in the political sphere, to change laws and systems that do not work for the Chinese.

The Chinese in Canada are now actively working to institute change rather than just hoping for it. The demand now exists, not just the climate.

### **EDUCATION IN HONG KONG AND THE ADAPTATION OF CHINESE CHILDREN IN CANADA: Pauline Tsui**

*Pauline Tsui is a psychoeducational consultant with the Toronto Board of Education.*

The schools in Hong Kong reflect the over-populated and competitive characteristics of this British colony.

In Toronto, teacher qualifications are more or less the same no matter whether one is in North Toronto or the inner city. This is not the case in Hong Kong. There are basically three kinds of schools: government schools, government-subsidized schools which are mostly church-sponsored, and private schools many of which are run for profit. Generally speaking, the first two types have the best qualified teachers, while those in the private schools vary greatly. Entrance is by examination. Because of the differing standards, most parents try to send their children to the best school they can get into, rather than the one closest to home. In other words, there is not the strong psychological or ideological attraction that exists to the neighborhood school in Canada.

Elementary education in Hong Kong takes six years, and secondary education five (Forms I to V). If a student intends to go to university, he takes two more years of matriculation courses (Form VI, Upper and Lower). The system is modelled on that of the British. English is usually taught from Grade I on and is considered a very important subject. At the secondary school level, there are two streams. One is called the Anglo-Chinese stream in which English is the medium of instruction,



while Chinese remains an important subject. The other is called the Vernacular stream in which Chinese is the medium of instruction and English remains as a very important subject. It is important for teachers here to know that immigrant Chinese children come from schools with varying standards and also from the two different streams at secondary school level.

In order to help their children get through the Grade One entrance examination into a relatively good school, most parents send their children to a privately-run two-year kindergarten. The six-year elementary education is free in government schools but not compulsory. At the end of the sixth grade, the government gives an examination, selects the more successful students and places them in the government or government-subsidized secondary schools. The rest of the students have to find their way into private schools, again through competitive examinations.

At the end of Form V, there is a school-leaving examination. The majority will pass, but only the most successful ones qualify for the matriculation courses and later sit for the university entrance examination.

Pressure to achieve is placed on a child from a very early age. Academic achievement is emphasized at the expense of physical, emotional, and social development. The teacher-training colleges preach child-centred education, but the schools are forced to be more realistic. Obviously, opportunities go to the better endowed and the more privileged children.

When Chinese children arrive here, they usually like school. They are relieved of the fierce competition. Despite the confusing classrooms with their open spaces, the physical activities, free classroom discussion and informal discipline, the children adjust well, and the parents are appreciative of the educational opportunities for their children.

Teachers in Canada like Chinese children because generally they are well-behaved and conscientious. If the children come here young, there is plenty of time to drill them in language and basic skills and to develop the child's personality and social relationship. Few of the younger children become a concern to the teachers. If they do, it is often due to one or both of the following problems: the child is too quiet or withdrawn, or he is making slow progress in English.

The Chinese parents emphasize character development and harmony in social relationships. They want their children to be honest, conscientious, obedient, and respectful. Quietness is accepted, if not encouraged. Generally speaking, Chinese parents do not attempt to draw their children out the way Canadian parents do. A retiring tendency on the part of the child is seldom recognized as a problem. On the other hand, the school wants the children to be responsible and involved, to make

friends and to be able to participate in a group. When we get a withdrawn child early, there is a lot we can do. We can place him with a compatible teacher, give him small group experience and provide additional help to build up confidence. Recreational programs in the community can also be of great assistance. Parents need help to see the difference in culture and hence in goals and expectations. They also need to be re-assured that play and fun are good for their children.

Problems among Chinese students who enter at the high school level are harder to overcome. If a student is reasonably bright and has had a fair education opportunity in Hong Kong, he can overcome the language difficulty and make other necessary adaptations. The standard in mathematics and in science subjects is generally higher in Hong Kong. Therefore, many Chinese students tend to do brilliantly in these subjects. Those who had a lesser opportunity in Hong Kong, find the obstacles much harder to overcome. Very often these young people have the ambition to succeed in school but not the academic foundation. Sometimes they are not realistic enough to accept the program and grade placement recommended by the school and its auxiliary services. They insist on aiming high and fail at the end. Unfortunately our high schools have not yet learned the best way to help this type of student.

In general, it can be said that Chinese children usually like school here. Chinese parents expect their children to have a lot of homework. It is interesting to note that the concept of "work" plays a central role in their culture thus the "hard" subjects like mathematics and science are considered of primary importance, and those like the social sciences, music, and art only come second. Physical education and extra-curricular activities are regarded as play, not part of the education process. And in a culture where much is being made of the rights of students, it is sobering to note that, for the Chinese, responsibility is emphasized more than rights.

A special responsibility devolves on the teachers to assist the parents to see the differences in goals and expectation between the Chinese and the Canadian cultures, on the teacher-training institutions to prepare teachers to work more effectively with immigrant groups, and on the school boards to continue (by imaginative in-service training programs) the work done in this regard in the faculties of education.

#### **THE ELDERLY CHINESE: Dr. S. F. Liu**

*Dr. Liu is vice-president of the Mon Sheong Foundation.*

Canadian discrimination against Chinese immigration has ensured that the proportion of elderly Chinese males is much higher than that in the general population. During the first half of this century those who came to Canada looking for a better life were not allowed to bring their wives and families. Many

never meant to stay permanently in Canada, but to return to their homeland, hopefully with a bag of gold. With the repeal of the Chinese Immigration Act in 1947, some of the more fortunate were able to send for their wives and children. However, the aftermath of World War II and the subsequent political situation in China meant that many of those who had intended to return found themselves marooned in Canada alone. These form a large part of the elderly in the Chinese community today.

Since the change of immigration policy in 1967, many more Chinese have come as landed immigrants. As a rule they bring their parents with them or send for them soon afterwards. This adds to the ranks of the elderly population.

We do not have any accurate figures of the Chinese population in Metro Toronto, let alone the number of the elderly, but judging from the membership of the Chinese Golden Age Association and the Wood Green Association, the number is substantial.

Arbitrarily, I would divide the population into three groups:

- Those who came before 1923, the pioneers.
- Those who came after 1947, their immediate families and students.
- Those who came after 1967, landed immigrants consisting of new families, many without other family ties in Canada.

The third group has come mainly from Hong Kong and the number has gradually increased over the years. In 1973 alone, total Chinese immigration to Canada was just under 15,000. Unlike previous groups of immigrants, this group contains many highly-educated and technical people. They have a good command of English and the education and knowledge to earn a living. Therefore they can establish themselves quickly. Many are well-to-do and they come to Canada to find a peaceful way of life.

When I first started to practise medicine in Toronto, my office was located outside Chinatown, for there was adequate medical coverage in Chinatown. Then about 10 years ago, I was invited by a few elders of Chinatown to set up an office there, mainly to help care for the elderly. I felt that I was obliged to do so, and I have maintained a separate office in Chinatown ever since.

At the beginning I used to perform many non-medical duties as well, such as filling in various documents and translating. We have established a good relationship. These are honest people. I never had to keep track of their payments for services. In the early days there was no medical insurance. They would come and pay when they had the money. I remember one man who came back five years later to pay

for my services to him. You cannot help devoting yourself to doing something for people such as these — your own people who need you.

Many of the problems of the elderly are not unique among the Chinese, but they take a special form. Let us consider a few at random and not in any order of importance.

Shelter is a big problem, particularly among the single males. They are often untidy and unkempt. They are very independent and insist on living their own style of life. Usually they present no trouble or problem, except if they are ill, when often there is no immediate family member to look after them or to do chores for them. Landlords naturally prefer not to have a sick person in the household. Sometimes the tenant is not ill enough to enter hospital. This presents a dilemma.

It is only in the last few years that we have Chinese residents in homes for the aged in any appreciable number. I still remember the day when we welcomed the first Chinese woman to Lambert Lodge. Everyone was geared for that occasion. On that day, the administrator of the home, the nursing director, and I were there to receive her. She turned out to be a healthy 65 year-old lady who did not get along with her daughter-in-law. Although she does not speak a word of English, she is still staying at Lambert Lodge. She is quite happy there and helps other Chinese newcomers to adjust to life at the Home. She is active in arts and crafts. We have to give her a lot of credit for adjusting so well in the new environment.

Many couples enjoy their small and tidy apartments in senior citizen housing projects. Their main objection is that many of the housing projects are too far away from the core area where they know the district well and where they can walk to shopping, recreation, and social gatherings.

This brings out one of the special features of the Mon Sheong Home for the Aged located on D'Arcy St., just one block north of the Art Gallery of Ontario. It is right in the heart of the residential district of the Chinese community and close to many community activities and facilities.

Today, the extended family living under the same roof is not like the ones I used to know, but we still have many more parents and grandparents living with their children and grand-children than any other ethnic group that I know of. When we live with our elderly, particularly when we are young, we incline to accept them more readily and to show more respect to them. This is one of the Chinese ways of life and we should cherish and preserve it.

Chinese is a unique language. It has no alphabet and it lacks some of the sounds in English, particularly the consonants "R" and "S."



It has been observed again and again that as we grow older, we tend to use more and more the first language we learned and know best. This is particularly evident after a stroke or some other brain disturbance. And in a tight situation, when someone swears at you, he often resorts to the language he knows best. Sometimes we are not able to communicate orally among ourselves if we speak different dialects. Many of the older Chinese do not know enough English to tell you about themselves. At times, it is nearly impossible to obtain a good and pertinent story from them. Medically, they may use descriptive terms which have meaning in Chinese but which cannot be translated into English. They therefore have difficulty in relating their problems to health care personnel. They prefer to seek help from Chinese doctors for the sake of freer communication. At the Mon Sheong Home for the Aged the staff will be bilingual, so that there will be two-way communication.

One of the most happy and inspiring events in an old man's or old lady's life is to see his or her children and grandchildren entering universities and getting their degrees. They try their best to influence the next generation to improve themselves and to climb out of the cocoon into the big world. Through their children they fulfil their own dreams and wishes.

When my wife got her first degree from McMaster University, there was great joy and celebration in the family. Since ancient times, the Chinese have always reserved special respect and privilege for the scholars. The children are inspired and expected to study diligently and to perform good work in school. Their academic standings and their number in the universities today certainly testify to the emphasis given to education by the Chinese.

But there is a paradox. On the one hand, Chinese parents like to see their children getting on in the big wide world. On the other hand, they are concerned about the gradual erosion of the respect and authority they have enjoyed in the Chinese tradition. The younger generation is more Canadianized. The older generation is worried that they may lose all the Chinese culture and customs. This is an environmental factor that we as a minority in a greater society cannot avoid.

There is no doubt that we have to learn to adapt and to mold ourselves but, at the same time, to preserve as much as possible the good portion of the ancient culture. We should have the best of the two cultures. I think we are lucky in this respect. One of the means of preserving some of our culture is by establishing Chinese schools for children. This is what the Mon Sheong Foundation has done. In these schools, we teach not only the Chinese language, but also our culture and philosophy.

A wedding in the family is another happily-celebrated event. This is usually a big

family affair. Often the parents and grandparents play a major role. Pre-arranged marriage is nearly nonexistent now, but the older generation still tries to have a hand in it.

There are two subjects the elderly often choose to avoid and not to discuss at all. They do not like to make a will and they do not like to go to hospital. It is often considered that one is near the end of one's life in this world if one has to enter hospital. To make a will is a bad omen and they are afraid to do so. In Chinese tradition, it has always been the oldest son who gets the bulk of the inheritance and there is no argument about it. Also, Chinese almost always honor the wishes of the dying man at the bedside without any written document. Of course, things are different in Canada and government has much to say in the matter as well.

Being transplanted from one culture to another without any knowledge or preparation to adopt the new culture is not an easy task. Many of the older Chinese consider themselves as being blind, since they cannot read English, as being deaf because they do not understand when spoken to, and as being mute for they cannot speak the language. How do you survive and adjust in such a strange society? That many of them have survived and many have prospered, even though they are handicapped on all counts, is a small wonder and a great credit to the Chinese-Canadians.

The Chinese senior citizens are not that much different from those of other ethnic groups. We have our own culture. We have our own language. But just like the others we wish to communicate with you and we want to become an integral part of the Great Canadian Society.

**MENTAL HEALTH AND THE CHINESE COMMUNITY: Dr. Albert Leong**  
*Dr. Leong is a psychiatrist at the Toronto General Hospital.*

I should like to begin with a case history. A Chinese woman in her 30s was referred to me for psychiatric consultation a few years ago by the courts. She was charged with committing violence and bodily assault on a policeman. The story was that she, her husband, and seven children had lived in a rented house for several years. She was completely isolated from the outside world, spoke no English and was frightened of non-Chinese neighbors. Her husband worked as a cook in a Chinese restaurant, and usually would not return home till dawn after a whole night of gambling.

Four notices in English had been sent by the landlord to demand that the family evacuate the house prior to demolition. Unaware of their content, she had ignored the letters and thrown them away. Finally, while she was in the hospital after the birth of her eighth child, she was informed that the authorities were going to remove the family from the house.

Angry and panicky, she immediately left the hospital without permission to return home to protect her family and belongings. She locked herself inside the house, refusing to open the door even to the police.

When the officers finally broke in, she started screaming and assaulting them with her purse. Then she was held by force and charged. In court, because she had left the hospital so soon after the delivery without the doctor's permission and apparently abandoned the baby, she was judged insane.

As far as the police and the court were concerned, she was crazy because she screamed and assaulted people. However, from the cultural standpoint, I did not feel such behavior entirely abnormal in a lower-class Chinese society. Knowing her story and background, I felt the main problem was non-communication and physical isolation owing to her total lack of acculturation to the Canadian lifestyle.

This is an extreme case of how cultural differences may lead to what seems to be emotional disturbance. Yet it is symbolic of the problems the lifestyle of the lower-middle-class in the Chinese community can engender. Often they do not live in a totally healthy environment and their general knowledge about health — mental health included — may be widely lacking. Many people would also prefer to use their seemingly sound yet inadequate knowledge of Chinese Herbal medicine, and try various herbs on their own when they are sick. Or they consult some self-qualified herbalist rather than visit a doctor.

Fortunately, a great number also seek treatment from a western-style doctor, preferably a Chinese one if they cannot speak English. The number of doctors in Ontario on December 31, 1974, was 15,900 serving a total population of more than 8 million people. These are the latest figures from the Ontario Statistics Centre. Of this number, there are about 200 Chinese doctors in Ontario, of whom about 120 are in Metro Toronto. It must be emphasized that these Chinese doctors do *not* see only Chinese patients, nor do Chinese patients go *only* to Chinese doctors.

Very few Chinese go to see their doctors for annual check-ups. Chinese patients also hate tests of any kind, especially those that involve taking blood. They believe such procedures lead to anemia. Many Chinese patients see their doctors for vague somatic complaints like headaches, dizziness, difficulty in breathing, heart-pumping, indigestion, and aches and pains here and there. Very often their doctors find nothing really abnormal or only very trivial problems. Not infrequently, however, these patients are actually suffering from mental illness.

From my experience, Chinese patients tend to somatize their emotional feelings. In other words, instead of telling their doctor they feel angry, frustrated, hurt, or hopeless, they would change these feelings into physical complaints such as ulcer

pains and arthritis. Drinking and smoking to excess are not characteristic of the Chinese. Gambling in various forms is the classic pastime to "think away" frustrations, especially for the male, like my patient's husband. In general, it seems that the Chinese keep a great deal of tension within them. At least it is rare that any outlet is observed outside the domestic circle.

There are 733 psychiatrists in Ontario, giving a ratio of one per 11,300 of the population. In Toronto, there are only four qualified Chinese psychiatrists, one in full-time practice, two in part-time, and the fourth in administration only. Two Chinese child psychiatrists have finished their training, and there are a further one or two residents in training. Therefore, for the large number of non-English speaking Chinese, availability of psychiatric help is extremely limited.

Mental health problems in the Chinese can be understood from the point of view of different age groups. For the oldest generation, old age is the time to relax and gather in the fruits of the working years. It is the time when one rightfully depends on one's children for comfort and financial support. The Chinese aged are set in their ways and are not eager to learn new customs, let alone a new language. Many of them are widows or widowers, who have come to live under the filial roof in Canada. Few are happy here. The cold weather confines them to their home. Unfamiliar grocery ingredients mean a change in food and meal habits. They lack friends here. If they cannot speak English, they must cling to Chinatown. The isolation is heightened especially if the daughter-in-law works or is Canadian-born and speaks no Chinese, and when the grandchildren converse only in English.

Another central focus of stress is the disturbance of the old family tradition. For example, they see the daughter-in-law as an additional member of a home which is founded on the solidarity between her husband and his parents. It is highly unlikely, when the elders arrive with these traditional expectations and views, that a Canadian-bred daughter-in-law, who has enjoyed full authority in her home, will acquiesce to occupying a subsidiary position on the arrival of her husband's parents. Therefore the elder is indirectly or directly reminded that he or she is a guest with little authority, and is further frustrated when the husband takes the wife's side of the conflict. The result is depression, and a wish to return home to China or Hong Kong. But to return home would mean having to admit that one was unhappy living under the filial roof, which would bring shame and loss of face. Not uncommonly, therefore, the depression is somatized in various aches and pains, which are rationalized due to the Canadian climate and food. This provides a face-saving excuse to return to the country of origin.

The middle-aged group comes to Canada to provide greater opportunity for their children for good free education and a chance for a better life.



In China, the most important criterion for membership in the upper classes was, until very recently, scholarship. Scholarly achievement led to bureaucratic power which, in turn, brought wealth and prestige. But what the parents are *not* prepared for here is that education in Canada will bring with it a marked change in behavior and attitude in the children. In many cases, children of unskilled parents learn to read and write English while the parents remain illiterate. The consequence is that the adults are then forced to depend on their children in various ways — a significant reversal of family status roles.

For the younger age group then, stress and frustration come from within the family. Owing to lack of understanding and/or communication or just because they speak no English, the parents are unable to show a real appreciation of their children's academic progress. Canadian values say there must be a healthy balance between work and play. The Canadian school system emphasizes recreation, sports, and social activities. The Chinese consider leisure time a luxury, and remaining idle a capital sin.

The older generation cannot see that playing games is important for development. Children are traditionally trained to useful tasks around the house at an early age, and are not expected to desire recreation.

If they are not allowed to participate in such social events as dances, club meetings, and sports, the children have little opportunity for inter-peer group development and upward mobility. Only direct confrontation with the parents will overcome this obvious disadvantage. This can lead to physical and emotional isolation from the family, and insecurity, anxiety, and depression. Some young Chinese students have come to Canada alone and friendless to study, while their parents remain in Hong Kong or elsewhere. And, for them, loneliness leads to prolonged unhappiness. They feel homesick. They miss their close friends. They feel inadequate and insecure, and have no one in whom to confide. At the same time they have to study hard for the sake of the family name, and have to make their family believe that they are happy in Canada. The responsibility may be so great that they may panic, fail to concentrate on their studies, and end up feeling hopeless and suicidal. Some develop gross psychotic breakdown.

Finally, I wish to touch upon some of the difficulties Chinese patients encounter in a mental hospital or psychiatric facility. Unless the patient speaks good English, management and care will be very difficult. Misunderstandings and misconceptions may abound on the part of both staff and patient. If the patient is already suspicious, he will become even more paranoid, in this world of "foreigners." You will recall that I stressed at the outset that Chinese people often have difficulty in expressing their emotional feelings. When you add to that the language barrier,

you can readily appreciate what and how a Chinese patient must think and feel if he is expected to verbalize these feelings in an alien tongue.

# The Greeks

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## AN OVERVIEW: Setiris Papadopoulos

*Mr. Papadopoulos is an architect who now lives in Greece.*

Who are the Greeks? Is their culture different from that of Canadians? What do the terms “different” and “culture” mean, really? If Greeks function differently from Canadians this does not mean that they are necessarily different. The difference, in an abstract sense, may be a “created” one depending on the purpose it is meant to serve.

Difference is not a generic or basic cultural fact but is created by and in favor of the people who utilize it. Thus if Canadians define the Greeks as being different, to suit whatever purposes they, the Canadians, may have, the Greeks will be seen to be different. Another example is the Blacks, who are going to be considered as different since the white society has influenced that image.

Of course the corollary question needs to be faced. What happens if the Greeks define themselves as being different from Canadians and define Canadians in their own way? Social interaction involves a multiplicity of self-and inter-definitions! Yet one must recognize that, at the practical level, the Greek-born are culturally different from the non-Greek Canadians and one should try to discover some of those differences. But we should not speak of people as different. We should try to understand similar people functioning differently. And in Canada this is what happens. Canada simply does not have a culture. Canadian culture is in the making from a number of cultures the immigrants bring with them.

What are some of the differing factors that have gone to make the Greek and the Canadian realities? One of these is mechanization. It is because of the dominance of mechanization that industrialized countries such as Canada have been able to achieve a higher and faster rate of production. As a result of mechanization, people are trained to specified jobs and/or skills and little room is left for involvement in a variety of productive activities. Highly routinized repetitive action is related to high productivity. The cultural consequences of this are manifested in the North American idea that time is money, that quantity and space — cars, houses, and all the objects of materialistic consumerism — are to be pre-eminently valued.

But Greece did not or has not participated, similarly, in the frantic rush to

industrialization and mechanization. As a consequence, Greece was and still is mainly rural. And time, instead of being equated with money — an urban time — has remained something that the individual utilizes according to his wishes and to fulfil his basic needs. Time to the Greek is rural time not “company” time. And when Greeks migrate to an industrialized country such as Canada, it is this rural definition of time that they take with them. This fact is of particular significance when it is borne in mind that the majority of Greek immigrants to Canada are from a rural background anyway.

To be Greek in Canada is to find time at one's work to share in the social joys and sorrows of one's fellow workers, to find time for the wine which may be drunk in the streets without shame, to find time to celebrate the harvest. In other words, to be Greek means to transfer any social meeting into a celebration, to live each day to the full without waiting for the weekend, to dance and to sing. Thus it is not by accident that the Greeks are one of the few people with a still vibrant folklore and music, for every man must know how to dance and play an instrument — how to express himself well.

It is against the stifling of this spirit by mechanization that Greeks struggle in any industrial society. When they came to Canada, the Greeks brought with them their country's richest resources, themselves, self-made products, elements strong in themselves. They brought with them an adventurous spirit that had led them to explore places beyond their natural space. It is these characteristics which are curbed in those, who as the unskilled — the work pickers, cleaners, and dish-washers — are exploited in the Canadian economy. Yet these are the hands and this the spirit which, with those of other immigrant groups, have contributed to the building of Canada.

### **GREEK FAMILY LIFE: Chris Antoniou**

*Mr. Antoniou is a social worker with the Toronto Board of Education.*

When a Greek child is born he enters a group of which he remains part under any circumstances. He does not have to earn his place in it, and the group need make no attempt to please him. Work, play, meals, conversation, celebration are in terms of the family, and are the way through which belongingness develops. Contacts with the outside world are made through the extended family. A child's friends are the family friends and their children. He goes visiting and to social gatherings with his parents, by day or by night, no matter how late. He goes to church with them, to social gatherings or wherever they are invited. When they entertain, the child is part of the gathering and usually stays up till the guests leave.

The Greek family is not child-centred. It is family-oriented. The child is not the focus, and the family routine is not disrupted or accommodated to the needs of the child. The expectation is that the child will adjust the rhythms and pace of his life



to that of the family. He is accorded a definite place within the family structure and learns to subordinate his individuality to the family. Family mealtimes are not changed, other routine activities are not altered to suit the child. Conversation is not trimmed down to his interest and, as a result, he learns to enjoy being with adults and to listen to their conversation. Until recently, no effort was made in Greece to create a child or teen culture such as exists in North America.

Family members spend much time together. There is no craving for aloneness and the word "privacy" has no Greek counterpart. Independence is prized, but the unit of independence is the family not the individual. The family must be independent of the world, except in so far as it has a claim on government aid or assistance. The individual never ceases to have a claim on his family. A married son may ask his father for help in business without feeling that he is begging or losing his independence. A daughter asks for things she cannot afford to buy. This is not viewed as dependence but as one's rightful claim on the family.

The family may impoverish itself to educate or dower one of the children, but the success of these children brings honor and satisfaction to the whole family. An uneducated older brother is proud of, and not bitter toward, the younger brother whom he helped make a doctor. Many young men emigrate in order to earn dowries for their sisters or to put younger brothers through university. Conversely, a man who has been educated by his brothers and who holds a high professional position owes it to his family to find positions for his nephews. If he emigrates, he will see to it that other members of the family are sponsored and set up in the new country.

Family loyalties transcend all others. Business enterprises are always staffed with near or distant relatives of the owner or manager. People from one's own geographic region are given preference over people from other places. There are more than 100 Greek organizations in Toronto. Nearly all are fraternal associations of people from a specific geographical region such as Laconia, Corinthia, or Macedonia. A man arriving in Canada without a sponsor will seek out people from his own geographic region. They will undertake to steer him to the appropriate community resources or individuals who will provide him with a job. This pattern may be waning as a result of more effective government services such as the provision of interpreters at reception and the processing centres.

The father is the authority and must be obeyed by the entire family. Traditionally women wait on men. A Greek villager may ride while his wife follows on foot. Discipline, when the children are very young, is largely the mother's responsibility. When major offences are committed, or outsiders such as school authorities, the police, or neighbors are involved, then the father may enter the picture. Physical punishment is freely used, usually a slap on the face or the rear

accompanied by much shouting and invective. Children are also disciplined through scoldings, ridicule, and reference to parental sacrifices or family honor.

The child is given freedom in his behavior within the limits of personal relationships. It is not wrong to be boisterous and noisy, but it is wrong to be so when father does not like it, or during a visit, or when it interrupts mother's work. The child is always on the periphery, never in the centre. The wishes of the older members come first.

A good child listens to his parents, runs errands and brings home praise from his teachers. He is rewarded by praise, or candy and toys if the family can afford them. A poor school record brings on parental displeasure, shame to the whole family, and ridicule to the child. Education is highly prized. Since it is seen as a means of social mobility and a vehicle for advancement in life, parents are eager to please the school authorities and they enjoin the child to work and excel in his studies. On the other hand, parental feelings can be easily bruised if they feel that the child is not being properly taught, is not given homework, or demonstrates attitudes to school and learning which are inconsistent with the parents' image of the school.

It is indeed a calamity for a Greek parent to be told that his child does not have the ability to proceed to a four or five-year secondary program. Parents plan for the child's future regardless of his actual scholastic performance or potential. If the child demonstrates poor ability or attitude, it is seen as a tragedy. Some parents feel that the school system is to blame, and prefer to return to Greece rather than submit to what they consider demeaning treatment of their child by the Canadian school system. "We came here for the sake of the children" is a stock statement.

Authority lines within the family remain fairly entrenched. Fathers do not fraternize with sons, although they may play with them when they are babies. Following the sixth or seventh year, the child is expected to begin showing "respect" and accord the father the privileges of his position. The father's authority over the child is unquestioned. It is difficult for him to accept the fact that the state's authority transcends his in Canada (such as in protection cases).

The child, even if not the focus of the family, is a valued member of it and is viewed with tremendous pride, particularly if he is accomplished. When very young, he is exhibited to relatives and visitors and may be asked to stand on a chair and recite a poem or sing a song. Praise or criticism is freely verbalized in his presence. He may be spoon-fed until he is three or four years old. Food may be forced on him in emotionally-charged scenes with the mother protesting that the child doesn't love her if he won't eat his food.

A well-fed baby is a sign of health and good care. Skinny or scrawny children are ridiculed and may be seen as a reflection on their parents' lack of ability to provide for them. In traditional rural homes the baby is still swaddled to enable the child to grow erect and firm as a "cypress." This practice is being gradually abandoned. The child is normally breastfed and is not weaned until 18 to 24 months. After childbirth the mother is expected to stay in bed for at least eight days and cannot leave the house for 40. She is expected to visit the church before she returns to her regular duties.

Toilet training starts at eight months for urination and 18 to 24 months for bowel movements. Training is not rigid and the child is allowed to develop at his own pace.

If there are older siblings, particularly girls, the baby is left in their care while the mother works. This task also often falls on the grandmother, who may be living in the house. Sometimes she may even be sponsored to immigrate in order to care for her daughter's or son's babies. Often the reverse occurs. A baby may be sent to the grandmother in Greece so that both parents can work. He returns a stranger to his parents at the age of eight or nine. These children are often confused and dis-oriented and find it difficult to conceptualize and form relationships.

Boys as a rule are not given responsibilities around the house such as making their beds or tidying up their rooms. Girls assume such tasks as a matter of course and often they are expected to look after younger siblings until parents get home from work. Role differentiation between boys and girls begins early. By adolescence it is clearly defined. Adolescent boys often expect their sisters to wait on them, serve their meals, wash and iron their clothes. Boys may engage in heterosexual relationships open or surreptitiously, but this privilege is not accorded to girls.

The position of an adolescent girl in a working class family is often an uncomfortable and difficult one. In very traditional homes all her activities are monitored not only by her parents but also by siblings, uncles, aunts and cousins. The male members of the family are the custodians of her honor, which is grievously jeopardized if she is seen flirting with boys or meeting them in trysts. In Greek villages, if a girl acquires a "bad name" she is likely to remain single unless she commands a large dowry or succeeds in having a young man fall in love with her. Shotgun weddings are not unusual. As a rule older brothers will postpone their own marriages until their sisters are married. Since the 1950s however, large numbers of young girls have acquired the opportunity to emigrate overseas alone under the auspices of international agencies. Many came to Canada as domestics during the decade of 1950-60.

Many marriages are still arranged. Even if the two young people like one another,



the consent of their respective families is necessary. Dowries are still expected and given, both in rural Greece and in the cities. The custom is not observed to the same extent by Greeks who live overseas. Marriages by proxy or mail are still occurring, but Greek marriages are becoming increasingly companionate. Romantic love is as rampant as anywhere else, although it is still considered to be a poor basis for marriage unless, of course, the couple is matched economically and socially as well.

The marital relationship can be best described as segregated, as distinguished from the joint relationship that characterizes the middle-class North American family.

A favorite pursuit of Greek husbands is spending long hours at the coffeehouse playing cards and discussing politics. This practice continues even when they emigrate. Wives, on the other hand, limit their contacts to relatives, family friends, neighbors or colleagues at work. The loss of these in Canada can lead to psychological problems with disastrous results on the mental health of the children and the marital relationship. Some dominant reactions of Greek families are distrust and suspicion of the wider community. Their distrust may include educational institutions which they feel undermine parental authority. They fear loss of control over the children, status reduction, the loss of a sense of belonging, and alienation from a lifestyle that does not support the definitions of "good" and "bad" which form the core of the Greek value system.

Perhaps Greek people can be best described as person-oriented individualists. The concept of "philotimo," loosely translated as "self-esteem," forms the core of the Greek personality. The essence of philotimo is inviolability and freedom. It makes people touchy since philotimo can be easily bruised through an unkind act or word. To protect the integrity of philotimo, the covering of naked fact is essential.

The inner core of the Greek person must never be exposed and "entrope" — the Greek word for modesty, decency, propriety, and self-consciousness — means "turning inward." A Greek person, as a result, does not talk readily of his family, and he certainly needs considerable emotional support in treatment and casework situations to be able to verbalize feelings about himself or his family.

To person-oriented (as opposed to object-oriented) individuals, existence apart from the group, especially the primary group, means one has no psychological support and is therefore undesirable. A person-oriented individual develops his aspirations within the group. He needs the group in order to become an individual. Consequently when person-oriented individuals must act together beyond the primary group, they lose interest and become "selfish" — that is, concerned only about what common action will do to them as individuals.



Object-oriented people, on the other hand, will join a secondary group in order to achieve a common purpose. This may explain the difficulty of involving Greek people in groups to achieve a specific goal.

Culture is a powerful determinant of behavior. It dictates how developmental tasks in the life of the individual are to be solved. Therefore, it imparts a cultural underlay to character formation. On the other hand, one must never lose sight of the fact that culture never succeeds in submerging totally the individuality of its members. One is first and foremost an individual and only then a cultural creature.

### **HEALTH AND ADJUSTMENT SERVICES: Dr. Babatzanis**

*Dr. Babatzanis is a practising psychiatrist, and a member of the seminar planning committee.*

During World War II and the civil war which followed, there was much suffering in Greece. Thousands were killed or died from starvation. Schools in rural areas were often closed and those people who are now in their early or late 40s received very little education.

During the civil war, from 1945 to 1952, there was massive forced separation of children from their parents. Children were taken outside of Greece for indoctrination. The government, in order to counteract this tactic of the enemy, moved many children from rural areas into the cities. Some of these children were later reunited with their families. However, many never returned to their parents and later emigrated to the United States and Canada as displaced persons under the sponsorship of humanitarian organizations. This group has been found to be vulnerable to severe depression. Early separation from parents and maternal deprivation is known to cause depression later in life.

Nowdays many new Canadians of Greek origin send their young children to Greece to be cared for by the grandparents until they reach school age. This leaves both parents free to work. When the children return to Canada to join the parents, they inevitably face many emotional difficulties, re-establishing contact with their natural parents, learning English, and adjusting in school.

Some Greek immigrants still arrange proxy marriages which often end in separation or divorce. The wives especially have very few or no social outlets. They are isolated at home with small children and often develop psychosomatic symptoms which mask depression.

They experience headaches, fainting, and dizzy spells which bring them into the emergency department of hospitals. When the medical examination reveals no physical illness, they are sent home. They tend to deny any psychological problems

because of the stigma attached to psychiatric illness. Therefore, they are not referred to a psychiatrist or to an appropriate agency and go from doctor to doctor seeking help.

People who deal with immigrants should make the Greek community aware of the poison control centre and the suicide prevention bureau. Although immigrants have difficulty utilizing these services because of the language barrier, they should be aware of them. They should become familiar with the visiting nurse service and should be helped to overcome their feelings of guilt about placing their aged parents in nursing homes. The extended family is fast disappearing.

Some Greeks still believe in the "evil eye" and attend religious services to dispel its effects. Among unsophisticated people there is a belief in "magic." A girl with a broken romance and suffering humiliation or jealousy may go for help to an old lady who practises magic.

Medical personnel may misunderstand certain home remedies. Razor scratches are sometimes made on the back to let out a fever. Those not familiar with this practice may regard the presence of such scratches on a child as physical abuse.

Interpreters are badly needed, but immigrants' dependence on them should be temporary. When immigrants do not learn the language and understand Canadian society, they do not know their rights and may be exploited. There should be bilingual professionals in all hospitals and key agencies. Non-Greek professionals should use the services of Greek professionals more readily.

A course for medical and legal interpreters is in progress at George Brown College, with one of the organizers being seconded from the Citizenship Bureau. About 30 people from four language groups will be available by the end of July. They are trained to assist doctors, nurses and para-medical staff in hospitals, as well as to assist in courts and other legal settings.

#### **EDUCATION: George Kirikopoulos**

*This statement was prepared for the seminar by Mr. Kirikopoulos and Mrs. Angela Karigiopoulos. They are involved in the Greek community education system.*

The Greek education system is very different from Canada's. A glance at it may provide insights into the reaction which is seen among those Greek parents who have children of school age.

The Greek educational system is basically centralized and subject-oriented not child-oriented. The subjects keep their autonomy. The "project work" characteristic of Canadian education that erases the lines of demarcation among subjects is almost nonexistent. "Fun" is more or less excluded from the process of

learning. Furthermore, some subjects hold a prestigious position. For example, a strong emphasis is laid on grammar and spelling because, to the Greeks, a learned man has always been one who knows his grammar and can spell well. So it is easy to understand why some immigrant parents have a lack of faith in the Canadian education system. Their children don't seem to be learning any "subjects" at the elementary school level.

The Greek school is authoritarian. The teacher in the classroom is the real authority. In the elementary school he is the sole one. The principal does not wield the authority nor have the prestige of his Canadian counterpart. Since he teaches classes himself, his authority is shared with the other classroom teachers. One gets the impression that many Greek parents in Canada do not fully appreciate the role of the Canadian school principal.

In the Greek high school, the language teacher is the most influential as the curriculum is oriented to the humanities. Attempts have been made from time to time to change this emphasis, but they have failed due to political and social factors.

Parents expect the school to teach manners. It is not uncommon for one to hear remarks such as, "Is that what you learned at school?" put to the youngster. Such a parental attitude puts a great deal of authority on the classroom teacher.

Homework in Greece is given as a matter of course. The teacher teaches and the student learns. This means that the teacher expects the child to know on the following day the lesson that was taught the day before. The student is subject to daily written or oral examinations. There is great emphasis on these tests, for if the student fails to respond a number of times, it is very likely he will fail the school year. Thus a student is kept very busy after school trying to memorize everything for the next day.

Without going into the merits or demerits of the system, one finds that many students in Ontario are not given much to do at home. Therefore Greek parents believe that the educational system in Canada is not nearly as good as the one they knew in Greece.

Religious instruction is compulsory, although the results are not quite what one would expect when one looks at the students' attitude to religion! This attitude may be because discussion is not encouraged, and the students are presented with an imposed doctrine. The situation is facilitated by the fact that, practically speaking, there is only one denomination in Greece.

We can easily see that the transition to the Canadian system is a drastic one,

especially for the parents, whose expectations are so different. And the schools do not help them very much.

Take the example of IQ tests and vocational education. As we understand it, IQ and aptitude tests are determining factors in deciding a child's future in school. We feel it is grossly unfair that these tests are administered to the children of immigrant parents. They have not had the time to master the language on which the tests are based, and their Canadian peers have an obvious advantage. The results are misleading. As a consequence, many promising children are put into so-called special classes which open only one avenue to them — the vocational school.

Many parents are not aware of these tests nor do they understand what they are all about, even though they sometimes sign papers from the school that solicits their permission to have the test administered to their children.

Many Canadian teachers complain of the lack of English language concepts which the immigrant students have. Apparently they fail to understand that the *reason* for this is family background. Many of the children's parents come from rural areas and have very little education. Therefore, they are unable to help their children much in the first stages of school in any language, let alone English!

An additional point needs to be made with respect to language. Frequently children are given to understand that speaking another tongue is detrimental to the learning of English. Neither parents nor children know where the teachers get this idea, which fails to appreciate the adaptability of the young and their ability to learn more than one language when the circumstances allow it.

This attempt to eradicate the mother tongue and replace it with English is due to a tendency to force assimilation. This is unnecessary. Assimilation is inevitable, and forcing it results in traumatic experiences for the child. He is made to feel ashamed of his own origins, language, and even his parents.

There is no encouragement, as there should be, from Canadian teachers to make infant children feel that they have the advantage of knowing another language and that this could be the means whereby they may get to know something of the great cultures of their ancestors. Is it intentional that a country which receives thousands of immigrants of different backgrounds every year makes no provision in the teachers' colleges for special courses to deal with the problems of educating immigrant children?



## The East Indians

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While the Intercultural Exchange Committee operated fairly consistently according to a successful designed over-all plan, it varied its methods somewhat in dealing with the different communities for what might be called “local” reasons. This variation dealt with such things as the approach it took with the planning committee. The way we worked with the Chinese planning committee differed from our way with the Greeks or the Portuguese simply because cultures are different and so people behave differently.

The most marked differences in the approach were manifested in the workshop held for the East Indians. First, the Indians held a conference of their own in the fall of 1974. People from India who work in various East Indian communities across Ontario came to it. This conference was called by the Indian Immigrant Aid Services in association with several other sponsoring groups and addressed itself to five themes: employment, adjustment, image, cultural retention and immigration.

The Intercultural Exchange workshop was planned loosely as a follow-up to their fall conference. Whereas the fall conference was for Indians only, this was for Canadians working with Indians. Furthermore, the second workshop focussed not only on Indians from the subcontinent but those from Africa and the Caribbean as well.

### **THE EAST INDIAN PRESENCE IN CANADA: Dr. T. J. Samuel**

*Dr. Samuel is an economist with the federal Department of Manpower. The views expressed are personal and thus not attributable to any of the organizations with which he is associated.*

The country of the origin of East Indian immigrants has many faces and many facets. A nation of about 600 million people, adding a Canada to its population every year, it is a land of contradictions. There live some of the poorest people in the world, and also some of the richest. India is atomic physicists in Bombay and Naga tribesmen in Assam. It is maharajas and street sweepers, Harvard or Oxford-trained scholars and unlettered farmers. It is tough Sikh soldiers and peace-loving Jain monks. It wears turbans, Gandhi caps, and no caps, the latest Paris fashion and simplest loin-cloth. It is palaces and huts, automobiles, and wooden ploughs. It is Hindus, Moslems, Christians (incidentally Christianity reached India before it reached Rome), Sikhs, Jews, Parsis, Buddhists, and atheists. The Indian speaks in many tongues and lives in a real multicultural

society. These are the socio-economic and cultural conditions in which most east Indian immigrants to Canada grew up.

The historical aspect of Indian migration to Canada makes very interesting reading. Asia and North America were completely unknown to each other until nearly 100 years after Columbus sighted the West Indian islands. The Chinese were the first Asians to come to Canada. They came via California in 1858 when gold was struck in the Fraser River Valley.

The Indians came much later. Sikh soldiers had done yeoman service for the British Empire. For their meritorious service in the army, some of them were rewarded by being sent to England as representatives of the Empire at Queen Victoria's Jubilee in 1898. They then visited Canada and were well treated and entertained. On returning to India they retained fond memories of their trip and some of them decided to return and settle in Canada. This group arrived in 1904 and filled labor shortages in the British Columbia lumber mills. Between 1904 and 1907, some 5,000 reached British Columbia. They were mistakenly called "Hindus" although almost all of them were Sikhs. As their numbers grew, there were outbreaks of violence against them, as against people of Chinese and Japanese origins, and measures were taken to stop the "Hindu" immigration. A very effective one was the "continuous passage" rule of 1908, which said that an Indian could not change ships at any intervening ports on the way from India. But there were no ships from India visiting Canadian ports! In April 1914 a memorable episode, the Komagata Maru incident, took place. About 400 Sikhs from India chartered a ship and *did* come by continuous passage to Vancouver. The ship sat in Vancouver for three months before finally being turned away.

Many of the Indian immigrants in British Columbia, having failed to realize their dreams, left for the United States. Like many Chinese and Japanese immigrants, they did not receive a rousing welcome there either.

Indeed if one examines the treatment meted out to oriental immigrants in the past, one could observe that rarely in social history has so much abuse been showered on so few by so many.

Approximately half of the people of Indian origin who are now in Canada settled in Ontario, mostly in Toronto. According to the 1971 census, Ottawa has a considerably smaller Indian population, followed by Hamilton, London, Kitchener, Windsor and Thunder Bay.

Indian immigrants who came before the Second World War went mostly to British Columbia. Even in 1946-61 period about 75 to 80 per cent of them went there. Since then, Ontario has been receiving a larger share than British Columbia.

Up to 1946 virtually all Indian immigrants went into one of three occupations: saw-milling, farming, or trucking. Between 1947 and 1952 about one out of six who came to join the labor force was in a managerial, professional or technical occupation. By the 1953 to 1955 period this proportion had risen to one-third; between 1956 and 1961, to two out of five; and by the 1962-to-1973 period to almost half. Among the professionals, about one in five is a teacher, another an engineer, and a third a doctor.

Apart from changes in occupational composition, there has also been a change in the religious background of the immigrants. No hard and fast figures are available, but it may be stated that the number of Hindus, Moslems and Christians from India has increased substantially in recent years. It would probably be true to say that the majority of recent immigrants from India are no longer from the Sikh religious group who were the first to come to Canada.

The process of adaptation and settlement of the immigrants may be approached from three angles: economic, socio-cultural, and political. Economically, people of Indian origin operate successfully at all levels of employment from laboring to top managerial class. Let us look specifically at three areas of economic adaptation — employment, income, and housing. According to a study of the Department of Manpower and Immigration reported in one of the volumes of the Green Paper, Indian immigrants who came between 1969 and 1971 started to work an average 5½ weeks after their arrival in the country. The British immigrants had to wait only half that time, while Chinese and Yugoslavian immigrants waited a week longer.

After three years in Canada, the Indian immigrants who came in 1969 had an average family income of \$9,056 a year. This compares with \$12,237 for British immigrants, who were at the top, and \$6,457 for Italian immigrants who were at the bottom. Between the years 1969 and 1971, the Indian immigrants had increased their income by 69 per cent.

Indian immigrants have not, generally speaking, established ethnic neighborhoods or residential communities. They are spread out in all residential districts from the posh to the poor. According to the study, in three years 29 per cent of them had bought their own homes. A quarter of Italian and Chinese immigrants, one-eighth of West Indian immigrants, and less than one-tenth of Greek immigrants became homeowners during the same period.

On the assumption that there are about 40,000 Indo-Canadian households and that the average income per family is now around \$13,000, their contribution to the gross national product of the country works out at more than \$500 million.

Indian immigrants have generated their due share of business operations as well. Some are easily recognizable such as boutiques, restaurants, and spice shops, but others are more inconspicuous. In general, one could say that people of Indian origin have integrated very well into the Canadian economy.

Available evidence indicates that Indian immigrants are integrating smoothly socially as well, although this is a much more difficult area to judge. According to the study of immigrants quoted in the Green Paper, 70 per cent of Indian immigrants reported that, after three years in Canada, they feel at home here. The question asked was: 'Do you now feel that Canada is your home country, or do you feel as if you belong more to your former country?' This compares with 50 to 64 per cent of immigrants from Portugal, France, Greece, and Britain, and less than half of immigrants from Germany, the United States, the Philippines, the West Indies, Italy, and Australia.

Partly — but only partly — this may be due to the Indians' ability to speak English. However, there must be other factors since the West Indians speak English also but their percentage is 20 points lower than the East Indians. Two out of three East Indian immigrants spoke English, some even at home, compared with one out of three from Germany and Greece, one out of four from Italy, Yugoslavia, and Hong Kong.

Indian immigrants were also more likely to take Canadian citizenship than many other immigrant groups.

Despite their high level of education, Indian immigrants — like most others — do feel culture shock on arrival. It may be asked "What is culture shock?"

An example may explain it. A Japanese woman immigrant to the United States in the early 20th century saw for the first time a husband and wife kissing in public. The immigrant was shocked. She wrote back to her people in Japan, "These Americans have a strange custom. They lick each other like dogs to show their affection."

Well, the Indian immigrants are unlikely to write such letters. But they do not accept all cultural aspects of the host society without question. For example, some Indian immigrants do not wish to participate in social dancing. They say it is "jumping around with someone else's wife."

The children born to Indian immigrants here are often culturally totally indistinguishable from other children. The only difference is their color. Many of these young men and women are now intermarrying with non-Indians. If this becomes widespread, it is unlikely that the Indian ethnic group will be visible in a



few generations time, unless replenished by a continuous stream of migration from India.

Indian immigrants are enriching the multicultural character of our society. Indian yoga, cooking, music, and so forth are being appreciated increasingly in Canada.

The Indian immigrant is often found torn on the horns of a dilemma — whether to retain his cultural identity or embrace the cultural values of the host society, lock, stock, and barrel. If circumstances force him to do the latter, I believe Canadian society will be the loser. In our multicultural society there should be room for all cultures. In fact under the policy of multiculturalism, what was until the other day Indian culture, is now part and parcel of Canadian culture.

Indo-Canadians face the problem of a poor public image. The media often has a tendency to highlight the negative aspects of their life here. For example, they sensationalize the recent troubles in the Sikh temple in Toronto and ignore the positive and creditable contributions being made by them. The lack of unity, and petty jealousies among Indian immigrants does not help in building a better image either.

In general, it appears that Indians are accepted by the host society in Canada. According to a survey conducted in 1970 by York University, and reported in one of the documents accompanying the Green Paper, only 10 per cent of Toronto residents would not accept an Indian as a relative or neighbor. By comparison, in the United Kingdom 63 per cent would not accept an Indian.

However, there are situations in which people of Asian origin as well as Blacks face prejudice and discrimination. A quarter of Asians and more than a third of Blacks in Toronto reported facing such situations in this survey. It must also be stated that one out of 10 white immigrants also reported feeling discrimination.

Prejudice and discrimination are rooted in ignorance. Nothing is more terrible than to see ignorance in action. The iceberg of prejudice is afloat today in our society. However, I hope the sunshine of knowledge will eventually melt it away. As enlightened members of our society, I believe we have a role to play in letting in still more sunshine.

The area in which integration will come last is the political one, although this is the most important. Once economic and social integration is achieved, political integration is less difficult, but by no means automatic. Political integration starts with the formulation of political opinions and culminates with full participation in the political process — standing for elections and so on. This may take more time, since political success often has to be preceded by economic success.

## EDUCATIONAL ISSUES

*A summary of group discussion at the seminar.*

- A parent from India said that Indian education is very different from that in Canada. Canadians emphasized doing and understanding. In India children learn the skills of reading and writing first, as early as four years of age. They learn the skills and don't worry about understanding until much later. Indian children learn three languages at a time from the beginning — Hindi, English, and whatever their local language is. India has 14 recognized languages for educational purposes.
- Indian children start Grade One at five and enter university at 17. They expect to work very hard at education, which is taken very seriously. The educational system varies greatly throughout India, differing considerably from urban to rural.
- What are the merits of “withdrawal” classes versus “reception” classes for children learning English as a second language? In the withdrawal system, children are taken out for an hour or two a day to learn English and spend the rest of the time in the regular classroom. In the reception class system, the children are kept in reception classes for most of the day and gradually released into the system. It sometimes takes a year to get children fully integrated.
- In India parents are involved in their children's education. But while they are very keen to encourage their children to do well at school, when the immigrant comes to Canada this is difficult. If both parents are working and are having trouble with cultural shock themselves, they cannot easily provide the support the children need.
- Indian children are not allowed to socialize as freely as Canadian children. They are encouraged to spend more time working at their books. Indian adolescents have problems in Canadian high schools because their parents do not understand the way Canadian children are allowed to socialize with each other. They do not understand the excessive degree of social freedom. Perhaps it would be helpful if school authorities could talk to the teachers about this.
- Are there any religious taboos that teachers ought to know about? Moslems don't eat pork. Hindus don't eat beef. Some groups eat no meat at all. This could pose problems for the cafeteria, but really the onus for informing the school about this should be on the parents. Children are more flexible than their parents in adapting to the new culture.
- Are children of ethnic origin assessed properly when they are assigned to classes for children with learning disabilities? This is a very difficult thing to determine. It is easier to estimate motor disability than language disability, but it was pointed out

that immigrant children are not used to the same sort of toys — motor toys — as Canadian children, and that even in this area judgments may not be adequate. A public health nurse noted that the health status of children from India varied widely. Some mothers from rural areas had not had proper care before the birth of their children. The children themselves had not had enough nourishing food in the first few years of their life.

- One nurse felt some parents do not want to co-operate with health problems. For example, there was a problem of Indian children who have lice in their hair. The parents did not seem to be as concerned as perhaps they should have been. Some Indians were surprised to learn that children having lice was regarded as a problem in Canada. Lice are apparently common in Indian villages where there are problems with sanitation. One can understand, without condoning, why the parents didn't take it as seriously as the Canadian public health nurses.

When we are assessing immigrant children who seem to be withdrawn, we should ask whether the child is shy and quiet just at school, or also at home. Immigrant children, like others, have their own personalities. Some of them are talkers and some listeners like the rest of us. We should not be too hasty about assuming that an immigrant child is withdrawn when in fact he or she has a quiet, shy, personality.

- Children who come in at the grade six level without English are the ones who seem to have the most difficult time. Besides having language problems, they are beginning to grow up and face the socializing problems of adolescence. This makes it very difficult.

- A Canadian-born participant made this point: "In all the other seminars we've had — the Portuguese, the Greek, the Chinese — the immigrants have complained about the school system and the social services. I've noticed in this school that Indian parents do not come in and complain. They seem ready to take advantage of everything that happens but, because they do not complain, the school is often not in touch with some of the parents."

An Indian parent suggested: "Indians, on the whole, tend to be fatalistic about things, and so they put up with what happens."

## **SOME CULTURAL DIFFERENCES**

*A summary of group discussion at the seminar.*

- It seems to stick in the craw of Canadian employers that when an East Indian woman shows up for a job interview, she invariably has her husband with her and he expects to sit in on the interview. He does this to protect the family integrity, but it may be part of the cause of abrasive situations between Canadian employer and

employee, leading to charges of arrogance and superior attitudes shown by Indians. The latter might be a hangover from the caste system in India and the British Raj.

- Cultural identity is by regions in India, and Indians identify themselves by the language spoken, rather than by the area lived in.
- Girls have difficulties with their parents because of the Canadian dating system. Clashes are most frequent over the age of consent, with Indian parents in violent disagreement with our system. In India consent rests with the father until marriage and then it rests with the husband.
- In India boys play cricket and soccer. An Indian said that when they get here, the boys want to participate in games, but no one seems to understand that hockey is a completely new game and doesn't come naturally to older boys. They withdraw although they are longing to join the game.
- Ethnic organizations should be accepted as a natural and important part of our society and should be treated equally with other organizations by governments.
- The newly-created Ministry of Culture and Recreation seems the logical ministry to help immigrants to the province to participate to the fullest in the democratic process. Also every resident of the province must learn the value of intercultural/inter-racial tolerance. Seminars (such as these), should be encouraged, strengthened, and taken up by the government but in co-operation with the people. To be effective, the new ministry must have active programs so the public will see that it performs a useful function.

High priority in staff time and budget should be given by the ministry to inter-group development with leadership courses and consultation for governmental and voluntary groups — initiation of programs that bring together different ethnic backgrounds such as parent-teacher associations; close consultation with the federal government to achieve co-operation in citizenship work, to help children with language and cultural adjustment difficulties in schools as well as mothers and their pre-school children.

- Indians follow certain social practices that differ from those of Canadians, and these differences affect the extent to which one succeeds or fails in making friends with Indians. For instance, in social intercourse, one does not touch a lady, so when Indians greet each other, one shakes hands with men and not with women.
- One does not make use of such practices as exclaiming "What a nice baby!" — common as this may be in Canada. Indeed, there are certain superstitious



practices which, quite rational to Indians, may strike Canadians as being illogical.

- Culturally, Indians do not have much difficulty adjusting to Canadian society because they have a good command of English. Many of them have a good educational background. However, some attempts to maintain their cultural identity can be achieved by the teaching of Hindi. At the moment, attempts at doing so are made at the community level. For example, the Indian Immigrant Aid Services holds Hindi classes on an experimental basis. Could Hindi be taught in schools as part of the regular curriculum or in evening classes sponsored by the boards of education and/or the Ministry of Culture and Recreation?
- Indians, like many other immigrant ethnic groups, tend to discuss their problems within the community rather than with outside governmental agencies. An ethnic service in the community acts as a halfway house.
- Indians have some very stable things in their culture which Canadians can benefit from. For example, Indians value education very highly. Frequently their achievements at western universities are high. They attribute this to their cultural values which instil a great deal of pride in them as East Indians.

The East Indians living in Canada have come from various parts of the world. For example, they immigrate here from Africa and the West Indies. What steps should be taken to bring about a closer liaison among East Indians from various parts of the world, to foster the development of an Indian subcultural identity? Who should take these steps? Should they be considered at all?

When it is assumed, for instance, that the West Indians are Blacks and the schools try to collect Black literature to help the West Indians with their remedial reading problems, what is to be done for those East Indians of West Indian origin?



## The Italians

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Forming as they do the largest subcultural group in Toronto (with strong internal organizations such as COSTI), and being among the oldest ethnic groups in Toronto, the Italians have been the subject of innumerable workshops and ethnic days.

The following is a report on one of these — an Intercultural Exchange Workshop. A significant feature was that it was held in a suburban community, Downsview, part of the borough of North York. Those previously organized by the Committee had tended to focus on “inner city” neighborhoods of the city of Toronto.

The report takes the form of a series of vignettes: an overview of things Italian, health services, family life, law, social services, and the attitudes of Italian parents to school. These are all succinct statements made by various speakers. All of them stimulate thought.

This section on the Italian community concludes with a paper “The Quiet Desperation of the Immigrant.” It was delivered at another seminar — one for the community relations workers of the Ontario Housing Corporation. It is included here because of its relevance.

### **THINGS ITALIAN — AN OVERVIEW: Dr. G. Bartocci**

*Dr. Bartocci is professor of Italian language and literature at the University of Guelph.*

When one studies Italy, the first impression is one of variety and diversity, particularly in the geographic and physical make-up. This is reflected in the history of the Italian peninsula. Yet all Italians have common qualities that have come down through the centuries. These include sensualism and passionate feelings, rationalism and a practical sense of compassion and kindness.

One cannot speak of Italian history as a whole. From the fall of the Western Roman Empire to the Proclamation of Unity in 1861, Italy has gone through centuries of fragmentation, tyranny, and devastation. As a nation, Italy is one of the youngest in Europe.

Before 1860, Italy had suffered a number of conquerors, Spanish, French, and Austrian. The most despotic were the Bourbon kings of Spain who occupied

southern Italy. They taxed the peasants even on the basic necessities of life such as food, and repressed them in such areas as education, culture, and literature. The north on the other hand had more enlightened rulers and to an extent the country flourished. The gulf between northern and southern Italy, created by political division, grew wider.

After the unification and liberation of Italy in 1861 by Garibaldi, this rift between the two halves of Italy did not narrow. The Italian rulers did not understand the southerners, and thought of them as lazy and treacherous. Life in the south, working the land that had been ravaged by centuries of exploitation, was hard, and suspicion thrived. From 1862 to 1911, 4 million people emigrated from southern Italy to countries in Europe and North and South America. This was halted between the two World Wars by Mussolini, but after the second World War, it started again.

The majority of the Italians in Toronto come from the south of Italy.

#### **HEALTH SERVICES: Dr. Sereno**

*Dr. Sereno is a doctor practising in North York.*

Italians have a number of problems when dealing with medical services in Toronto. The major problem is the lack of Italian-speaking doctors. This means the community is receiving inadequate service from the medical profession.

The typical Italian patient may be categorized by age and sex. The newborn pre-school child is the centre of the family life. He is usually spoiled and overfed since it is thought that a fat child is a healthy child. At the first sign of any minor ailment such as a cold, the child is rushed to a doctor or the emergency department of a hospital for treatment. When the children reach school age, they suffer both physical and emotional traumas. First they are transported from a protective home environment to a new foreign one where they have to learn a new language and new customs. Usually they find school difficult because of the language barrier and the inability of their parents to help them in schoolwork.

As teenagers, boys seem to adjust well, but girls have controls put on them at home and are not allowed to socialize except with family friends. The issue of birth control plagues married women for religious and social reasons. When the girl gets married, it is expected that she will soon become pregnant, and birth control is not widely used. This results in large families which then put greater pressures on the Italian wife. When birth control is used, the most favored method is interruption or withdrawal.

Most Italian men are laborers or semi-skilled workers, and are prone to industrial accidents. The Workmen's Compensation Board has become skeptical of any



Italian complaining of back pains, although in their line of work, back injuries are common. The lack of knowledge of WCB procedures on the part of the Italians creates additional difficulties in dealing with the Board.

The role of senior citizens is normally that of baby-sitting and housekeeping, which creates stress in families and among senior citizens.

**FAMILY LIFE: Fr. Claudio Piccininni**

*Fr. Piccininni is founder and director of Societa Unita, an organization dedicated to helping fellow immigrants.*

A look at Italian family life makes one come away with a sense of respect for the Italian family. A family is a complex of values, feelings, attitudes, love and unique experiences.

Families from different cultures are organized according to different traditions. Italian families are organized in a set of patterns which are undergoing change even in Italy, but there change occurs in the context of continuity. When Italians move to Canada, this context is lost. A difficult situation in an Italian village becomes a crisis in a Canadian city. The phenomenon of migration involves a drastic up-rooting and means that the family needs certain survival skills. It requires understanding and compassion on the part of the social worker to help the family build new structures for itself.

The rebuilding of family structures is often at the bottom of our list of priorities in providing help. This is entirely wrong, for the needs of the family are important. And when working with the Italian family, one should take into consideration the material at hand, primarily, the culture. Some points must be considered in working with transplanted persons. Strengthening the family unit is important when normal patterns are broken, or fear and confusion ensue. The family must learn to trust itself again. Transplantation brings the issue of freedom within the family forward as a threat, because freedoms in the new society are not understood.

The image and role of parents conflicts with the image and role back home. The family must feel secure, not only financially, but also internally.

The old Italian family structure must undergo some painful changes in order to integrate fully into Canadian society. The family needs help and understanding during the process.

**LAW: Steve Ponesse**

*Mr. Ponesse is a lawyer in North York.*

One has to be careful not to stereotype the Italian! However, a lawyer's Italian clients are usually less well-educated and less wealthy than the average, but seldom on welfare. Italians generally hold the law in little respect due to the history and culture of Italy where there is a general fear of criminal charges and distrust for the law. Thus while Italians generally live within the law, they do tend to try and use it for their own personal gain. And in legal matters they normally stay away from lawyers as long as possible.

Because they lack the sophistication most Canadians acquire in the process of education, Italians try to avoid paperwork. This tendency usually decreases as they integrate into Canadian life. Italians would prefer to pay their lawyers on the basis of cases won rather than work done. This can lead to misuse of the legal profession by the Italian client. When in trouble with the law, Italians are impatient and inclined to panic. In the courts they have problems being believed because their accent, poor English, dark and "surly" appearance, not to mention Canadian attitudes and stereotypes, tend to weigh against them. Also they are inclined not to tell the whole story but just give the points of it that favor them. If they understood the Canadian legal system better, they would be served by it more effectively.

**SOCIAL SERVICES FOR THE ITALIAN IMMIGRANT: Bob Marino**

*Mr. Marino is a lecturer at the School of Social Work, University of Toronto.*

There are a number of problematic areas in the delivery of services to the Italian community. One has to look at underlying issues within the context of serving immigrants. Social service is the collective use of public money outside the marketplace for the betterment of the quality of life for the people.

Immigrants need services but delivery is complicated by the fact that the immigrant is confronting new systems. Rather than giving answers to what immigrants need in social services, I would prefer to raise the importance of the following issues. What is the effect of social service on these?

**Understanding of immigrants**

- Who is the immigrant?
- What are the problems?
- What are the immigrant's values?
- Where are the answers?
- Have we sought answers?
- Are our professional schools aware of these immigrants?

## **Understanding the values of immigrants**

- What are we doing to the immigrant?
- What are *his* values?
- Are there value conflicts?
- Is there multicultural interaction and equality in our programs?

## **Programs for immigrants**

- Given our understanding and our own values, do these affect day-to-day activities?
- Do the programs reflect the communities they are to serve?
- Are the programs following a partnership model?
- Is there community self-help?
- Is there mutual interaction in the programs?
- Do they change values?

## **ATTITUDES OF ITALIAN PARENTS TO SCHOOL: Claudio Marioni**

*Mr. Marioni is a social worker with the Metropolitan Toronto Separate School Board.*

In Italy there is a lack of communication between parents and teachers. Relations between students and teachers are formal and the classroom is very authoritarian. In Canada the relationships in the classrooms are more democratic. These are differences that cause problems. The majority of Italian parents have little education and therefore adaptation to new approaches is more difficult for them, the process of trying to adapt creates insecurity which in turn makes them feel isolated. The end result is that parents feel highly uncomfortable in dealing with the schools.

The children are ashamed of their parents and try to keep them away from school. The attitudes of the school to the Italian parent are bad. Integration is a two-way process that creates a new society with new values. One has to accent positive values. The society has to accept the values of immigrants.

Why don't they learn English? A lot of them try. However, language ability seems to be related to the level of education. The lower the level, the harder it is to learn English. The Italian community of Metro has a variety of services, newspapers, stores, etc. Aren't these obstacles to integration? They actually help to create a sense of belonging within the Italian community.

Here are some common reactions of parents to the school systems.

- The levels of education vary between schools.
- Why psychological tests? The child is not crazy!
- Why special classes? The child is not retarded!
- The child is not doing well? The teacher doesn't like him!

## THE QUIET DESPERATION OF THE IMMIGRANT: B. D'Antini

*An address at a seminar for Ontario Housing Corporation community relations workers at Queen's Park, May 21, 1975.*

*... and then madness was very near, as I believed it would be near the man who could see things through the veils at once of two customs, two educations, two environments. —T. E. Lawrence.*

With these words, Lawrence of Arabia sums up his life — that of an educated, urbane Englishman among the Bedouins. He had abandoned one mode of living but found he could not span the cultural gulf which separated him from the people he lived and worked among. What resulted was “an intense loneliness in life,” a feeling with which the immigrant must live in varying degrees of intensity for as long as he is separated from the land which gave him birth and nourished him.

To understand the stresses experienced by the Italian immigrant in Canadian society, one must bear in mind that he is not only an immigrant but also an emigrant. Unlike most other Europeans who have come to Toronto, the Italian's shift has been not only a geographical-cultural one but a temporal one as well. He has abandoned his farm in southern Italy (whence the majority of Italians in Toronto originated). On his farm he scratched out a living for himself and his family from impoverished soil using agricultural methods that until recently had not changed appreciably since the Middle Ages.

He has immigrated to a typical 20th century, highly industrialized and technological urban centre. The resultant disorientation is overwhelming. Hoping for professional futures for his children and greater material welfare for himself and his wife, he has exiled himself from the land of his birth. In classical times, exile was often dreaded more than death itself. And, in a sense, the present-day Italian immigrant commits social suicide when he abandons the cultural and social milieu which defines him. He doesn't quickly find an adequate substitute in Canadian society.

So he relies greatly on his immediate family and kinsmen to lessen the disorientation, the insecurity, and the anxiety of functioning in an alien culture which he does not understand. To lessen these negative feelings, he increasingly embodies basically materialistic values centred on two things: his job and his house. Even in his job he may feel insecure, but the job is important because it maintains the house which, to the Italian family is paramount.

The central institution of Italian society is the family. It provides a system of social control which operates to enforce and perpetuate mores and values which are old, traditional and strict. The father is the undisputed head of the family and the delegator of authority. In Italy the system is secure because the patterns of



behavior it enforces are stable, understood, time-tested, and sanctioned by the Church. This is vastly different from the North American family situation where control is loose, and authority rests mainly with the individual.

Historically, the Italian family has been the bulwark of the individual against disorder. It has flourished because of (and sometimes at the expense of) the weakness of Italian political institutions. Where, as in southern Italy, institutionalized authority has been weak, the safety and well-being of the individual are guaranteed mainly by the family system.

For the Italian — and the southern Italian in particular — kinship occupies a more important place in a person's social life than for the North American. The rights and obligations which derive from membership in it provide the individual with his basic moral code. Moreover, a man's social status as an honorable person is closely linked with his ability to maintain and/or improve the economic position of his family and to safeguard the purity of its women, whose virtue is bound inextricably to the family's collective honor. Thus, a man's responsibility for his family is the principle upon which his life is centred. Other values and organizations are of secondary importance. If they interfere with his ability to carry out his primary obligations to his family, he combats them. In so doing, he is supported by his peers, even though such actions may sometimes be contrary to the law. The behavioral and moral code governing the family is not necessarily the same as the legal one which governs the social order. Most of the time the two codes are not in conflict with each other, but when they are, the latter assumes secondary importance.

For the Southern Italian, the world is divided into kin and non-kin. The kinship network is vast. But the help which can be expected from kinsmen, and reciprocally, the obligations one owes them are directly related to the genealogical distance. The degree of loyalty extracted by the family from its members is boundless. Every one is duty-bound to provide for its welfare. They are expected to enrich it, make it powerful and respected, and defend its honor. Conceptually, it is eternal. In practice, all its members are obligated to safeguard and ensure its eternal duration. Hence the value put upon having lots of children, especially sons to carry on the name.

Hence, too, the value of the house as a focal point of the nuclear family's present and future obligations and affection. And the preoccupation with one's job as a means to an end, the acquisition and maintenance of the home. Home ownership must be achieved as quickly as possible. The house must be owned outright, with no mortgages or debts against it. To achieve this, all members of the immigrant family are under pressure from both within and without to work and contribute to the over-all income — often at considerable sacrifice to themselves.

This is greatly at odds with North American values surrounding the home which are reflected by the boom in high-rise living and the accelerating rate at which people move from one dwelling place to another.

Therefore, a discrepancy of values is brought into the Italian home by the adolescent who has assimilated a different attitude from that of his parents toward money and home. He resents having to turn over all his personal income (usually from an after-school job) to acquire property which does not have the same meaning for him as it does for his parents. Often he cannot understand or appreciate the inordinate sacrifices of his parents, nor the degree of sacrifice expected of him. He rebels against the way his parents cancel out his efforts to achieve the measure of self-sufficiency which North-American society values so highly, and which he too has learned to appreciate. He resents the control his parents have over him.

They, in turn, seeing the degree to which their children have internalized alien values, become terrified of "losing" them. Desperate to reassert control, the parents threaten to send them back to Italy to learn the values which the parents see themselves as having failed to instil in their children. But this, if ever, is rarely done.

The man is head of the family and the principal provider. The woman's function is much more diversified. Her roles include those of mother, faithful sexual partner, educator, peacemaker, and co-laborer. Within the family her influence and control are boundless. Yet outwardly she is a second-class member of society, subordinate to her husband who is and must be regarded as the supreme master of the household. However, this, by and large, is an illusion which the family tries to convey to the outsider, for the mother's power, if not formally acknowledged, is nevertheless very real.

Power, moreover, is the context which defines the marriage contract. The principal purpose of married life is not the realization of adolescent love dreams and the perfect fusion of two souls through romantic ecstasy. It is the foundation of a new family and the regeneration of existing ones. This is an attitude characteristic of the southern Italian village community. Any motivations over and above this are neither understood nor appreciated.

However, for the immigrant family, the situation is quite different. When adolescents internalize many North American values and norms of behavior, a state of affairs exists which goes under the currently fashionable cognomen of the "the generation gap." For immigrants, the gap is very much widened by the fact that the two generations have grown up in different communities with different cultures and a different set of values. In many instances the situation is further

aggravated by a severe handicap in simple instrumental communication. The parents speak little English, and the children speak little if any Italian. Nor are they able to teach each other in any meaningful way. Both parents probably work, usually with fellow immigrants. The children are at school, where, under pressure to acculturate as quickly as possible, they are functioning entirely in English. With these severe communication deficiencies, parental control is corroded even further. The gulf grows. The situation leads to resentment, especially when the children have to follow the dictates of the father merely because of his authority, without any appreciation of his reasons.

The parents operate mostly out of fear. The possessiveness and overprotection, natural to the Italian parent, is intensified to the point of suffocation. What is here in Canada is generally seen as bad. The parents see it as their duty to preserve as much of Italy in their children as they can. This means a very stringent application and enforcement of values and norms of behavior which are not necessarily acceptable to their children.

For the boy, it means great pressure to do well in school. He is expected to become a professional man whose status and prestige will enhance the family as a whole, irrespective of whether the boy wants, or is able, to do it. If his aspirations and those his parents have for him coincide, there is no problem. In fact, they will be a great source of moral and material support. If the aspirations are different, conflict may result. In order to avoid this conflict, the student who is more educated and is more knowledgeable of the school system than his parents, may paint a picture of his progress at school which is not necessarily in keeping with reality.

In the vast majority of cases only a modicum of communication exists between the home and the school. The parents are obliged to accept what the son says as wholly true. If they are at all inclined to seek confirmation from the school, the son himself owing to the dire shortage of Italian-speaking staff in the school, is often asked to act as translator. The biases in interpretation which this can lead to are fairly obvious!

Therefore, the student may effectively and completely eliminate his father's authority over his education if he chooses. And it is the father who is subject to the son under such circumstances, a blow to his paternal pride and sense of honor.

For the adolescent girl the situation is more painful. Parental control is constant and rigorous. Generally she is not allowed to go on dates nor to participate in extra-curricular activities like her peers. The reasons for this are two-fold. First, she is required to assist the mother in the household work. Second, and more important, there is the constant fear for her reputation. However much the

parents may be reassured that there is very little to worry about when their daughter attends a social function, such as a school dance, unescorted, they are plagued with the worry that the neighbors might see her alone with a boy and she will thereby acquire a bad reputation.

Virginity is the *sine qua non* of marriage. And a bad reputation is just as damaging as the actual loss of maidenhood. Either would seriously hamper the father's efforts to find a husband for his daughter. If he failed to do so, an inevitable sense of shame would descend over the entire family.

Having internalized so many non-Italian norms and values, the adolescent girl feels pressured by her peers to date, wear make-up and stylish clothes, and have a boy friend. She is subject to two sets of expectations and must, consequently, function as two persons. It is not uncommon to hear of instances where girls leave home in the morning dressed in a manner acceptable to mother and once at school, change into garments borrowed from friends. They invent excuses in order to have time to meet with their friends. But ruses don't often work for very long. The kinship network is vast, and all behavior deviating from the norm is eventually reported back to the parents. The consequences are usually severe.

Thus Italian boys and girls must function within two different sets of values. Conforming to that of their parents, which is seen as old-country and irrelevant, is an act of respect and love, as well as fear. Their natural sympathy lies with the Canadian culture, the culture of their peers. Consequently they tend to interpret demands to adhere more rigorously to their parents' precepts as a repression of their true personalities. They start to reject this "Italianness," and with it, their Italian selves. This reaction, fed by a shame of being Italian and therefore different, makes them reluctant even to speak the language. Thus communication breaks down even further, to the point where in extreme cases parents and children live as strangers in the same house.



# The “reverse” workshop

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## PLANNING FOR IT

During the course of the workshops, it became evident that several of the ethnic participants, willing though they were to co-operate, were becoming disturbed at the “one way” nature of the workshops. As one person put it, “We have been coming to you Canadians to tell you about ourselves — our country, our culture and our problems in Canada. It’s about time the Canadian-born “non-ethnic” came to *us* to tell us what Canada is all about. Why should we be the ones always to bare our souls?”

The committee could not ignore this criticism for long, particularly since some of its members held a similar view. Consequently it was decided that the ninth workshop, — the one to end Year Two of operations — would be what came to be called the “reverse workshop.” We planned to adhere as closely as possible to the basic criteria established for the other workshops: an identifiable ethnic neighborhood, a one to two ratio of the ethnic group (the Canadian-born founding race in this case) to the interested outsiders (here the immigrants); and an ethnic meal.

Immediately several problems presented themselves. First, where does one find a well-defined reasonably typical Canadian “founding race” community? Second, where does one find the people who would be representatives of this community interested in this topic? We wanted people other than those whose jobs were already in the multicultural field, such as the director of the Ontario Human Rights Commission. He was Scottish-born in any case! Third, what constitutes a *Canadian* ethnic meal appropriate to such an occasion? And finally, who would be a good representative speaker on Canadianism?

Simple though these questions may appear, they were of profound significance in as sensitive an area as multicultural or ethnic reality.

First of all, there is obviously no readily identifiable “founding race” neighborhood where people would be interested in participating. Indeed, it became quite a problem to find any “old pine” or “founding race” Canadians to attend such a workshop, apart from those whose work already involved them in such issues.

It was decided to hold the workshop in the evening, in the Debates Room of Hart House at the University of Toronto. A more imposing monument to Anglo-

Saxonism of both the United Kingdom and Canadian styles would be difficult to find, attractive though it may be for university purposes. The ethnic meal was to be wine and cheese! Representatives from all ethnic groups who had participated in their workshop were invited. Thus the audience was ethnically heterogeneous. These decisions were made in all innocence, but hindsight easily shows the reasons for the type of difficulties to which they gave rise.

The speaker chosen was Mr. Arnold Edinborough, Executive Director of the Council for Business and the Arts, a former university professor, and for several years publisher of the well-known Canadian-oriented journal, *Saturday Night*. Some members of the committee felt that while an outstanding speaker, Edinborough was not the wisest choice since he, too, was an immigrant and people wanted a Canadian-born to tell them what Canada was all about. Others felt that his having been here for almost 30 years and observing the Canadian scene from the vantage point of publishing *Saturday Night* would offset the disadvantages of his place of birth.

Edinborough's address follows. It stimulated some, irritated others, but definitely led to one of the liveliest debates on multiculturalism witnessed at any of the workshops. Following the address, we have presented a few of the sources of controversy to which it gave rise.

### **THE BRITISH ROOTS OF CANADIAN SOCIETY: Arnold Edinborough**

I also am an immigrant. I think that if we are going to look at Canada dispassionately, we have to start at the beginning and say that there are three major streams which have fitted together to make the pool which is now Canada.

The first are the Indians. We forget them very often you know, but we do so at our peril. The fact is that the Indians had this country for a long time before any immigrants did. In the curious way in which later colonizing races always did in other countries too, we assumed that all Indians were the same, but it is quite clear that this is not so. There is a great difference — a very marked cultural difference — between the Plains Indians on the great plains, between the Six Nations that we find around this area, and the Pacific Northwest Coast Indians who had a very highly sophisticated social structure, a social structure which still works.

For example, not too long ago, the regional Bishop and I visited the village of Greenville, staying with the priest there. It was a private visit, yet constantly people came bringing gifts of food for the guests of the priest.

The priest was a member of one family tribe or sect in the village — the Killawack — and according to their social system every member of that family had to give something to the visitor because if he visited one, he visited them all.

The second group we have to consider is the French. The French were the first to come here after the Indians. They arrived during the 16th century, took one look and went home. Then they came back in 1608 and the possibilities of the place began to manifest themselves. Champlain's colony really began to take hold somewhere around 1635. So it is about 340 years ago since the French really began to colonize this country.

Then the third stream were the British. You will pardon me if sometimes I say "English." Any time I say English, I really mean British. The Scots and Irish were always very keen to point that out! The fact is, however, that the initiative to come to Canada in 1660 was English. The Company of Adventurers journeying into Hudson's Bay was an English company with English capital. But, of course, the English themselves did not come. They sent the Scots instead! And from 1660 on there has been a British presence in this country.

Sometimes I feel that the Quebec nationalists forget that the British have been here almost as long as they. The Hudson's Bay company, as you know, is now called the Bay, but still in the north it is HBC. There are many people there who really believe that HBC does not mean Hudson's Bay Company at all but "here before Christ." As, indeed, they were, in many places!

If we take those three streams to begin with, the Indians, the French and the British, we begin to evolve, over the next 250 years, the society into which the later streams of immigrants really came.

Also, let us remember, that with the Indians here, the French and English either warred against them, or paid them to be soldiers in their wars. Then the French and British settled down, after a series of battles, in which more often the fate of Canada was settled as a result of British and French politics, not Canadian politics. Finally in 1759, the constant fighting ceased with what in England we still call the Battle of the Heights of Abraham and the French and Canadians call the Battle of the Plains of Abraham. And that's an interesting difference. The English thought they won the battle by scaling the heights, the French that they were beaten in unfair fight.

After that, there was some attempt by the British to impose British traditions on the French. That is a notably unrewarding pastime as we have seen in this century and especially in the last 10 years. The result was that, by the time of Quebec Act of 1773, the language, culture and religion of the French were guaranteed to them in perpetuity.

Some recent historians have said that this was not due to any liberalization on the part of the Colonial Office in Britain. Rather they thought it would keep the

Quebeckers in the British camp. This in turn would discourage the 13 colonies to the south from revolting, as their natural ally would be against them. One recent historian says that it achieved neither. It alienated the French because they thought they were in short numbers anyway, and it made no difference to the New Englanders, who went on and revolted anyway. But the fact is that, by 1774, it was clear that we had two peoples in this country — the Indians were a third — and those two kinds of people had said “We will live in partnership together, each speaking a different language, each having a basically different social structure based on a different attitude toward religion.”

Now if we look at some of the other traditions which we have in this country, I would suggest that one of the things about being Canadian is that you have to be aware of the fact that there are no problems. There are only challenges. Nobody could conceive of living in Winnipeg or Edmonton, Regina or Brandon without thinking this way. The climate is so harsh and so unrelenting that, if you did not believe you could conquer it, you would give up!

The Indians always thought they could beat the climate. I really believe that our tradition of saying that, “sure it’s a bad climate but we can still beat it,” comes from the fact that, through Indian help, we can beat it — we do beat it.

For example, on the multicultural committee on which my wife serves, an Indian said: “Without snowshoes, you’d never have been able to move on land. Without the birch-bark canoe, you would never have been able to move on water. Without pemmican you would never have been able to go any distance either way because your food would have run out.” And this is true. The Indian’s attitude toward this somewhat harsh land has conquered it. We have learned from them how to do it although we don’t give them, or at least so far, have not given them the kind of credit due to them.

Again, from the French we have inherited certain things. For a start, the French had not been here more than 10 years before they decided they needed a strong church. We all came of course in search of furs and souls at the same time. Essentially, incursions into Canada occurred because British and Dutch businessmen like to wear hats, and the best beaver was available in Canada. In many cases the best beaver was in robes that had often been worn by Indians. And therefore secondhand blankets were the basis of the discovery of Canada. We should always bear that in mind if we get a little uppity!

The French came and they brought the Recollet Fathers with them first of all. Then they brought the Jesuits. In fact, the major source of the history of the first hundred years in Canada is in the Jesuit “Relations” (*Les Relations*), a journal still published by the order, although a very pale imitation of its former brilliance. It



was the idea of the French to convert the Indians to Christianity, since essentially Christianity is a work ethic and the Indian religion is not. Once the Indians had become "good Christians," they could be paid less for their services but would be expected to work harder.

However, because the French came (and with them the various orders, not only the Jesuits but also the Grey Nuns) something else was added. It was quite clear to the French that if they were ever to be the farmers they wished to become, they would not only have to have bodies on the ground and souls in heaven, but, in addition to that, they would have to have an organization which looked after people. So both the educational system and the first hospitals were run by the church. This church educational system was later imitated by the British. We still have an enormous number of hospitals in this country which essentially belong to the church. They may now have a relationship with the new ministries for health and welfare, but the whole process of taking care of people remains very much what the French gave to this country, in my view.

The French, again copying the Indians, believed that you could make fun of and make a challenge out of almost anything that came along. So all the good folk songs we have in this country are not English. They are French.

They also integrated. The priests were back in Montreal and the voyageurs were on the rivers. While the priests had said that you should not commit fornication, there were women about, and the priests were a long way away! Therefore, of course, we have a large Metis population in this country as a result of that original intermingling.

Racial problems in this country would be fewer today if we had continued in the same way as the French began with the Indians.

And what did the British bring? First of all, of course, they brought the monarchy. When in 1776, the revolution did come in the United States or the New England States, there were many people who were loyal and you had to be loyal to the monarchy to be loyal to George III, who was crazy! More accurately they were loyal to the office he held, which was mightily important to them.

So the Loyalists came up to this country and brought with them the monarchy. They also brought with them, over a period of time, parliamentary government and, whatever else one may say about the British in this country, the matter of the monarchy and the matter of parliamentary government are the bases on which all our social instruments have since been built.

It's not fashionable now to like the monarch. Some think that Queen Elizabeth

speaks with rather an affected accent, and when she says "My husband and I" it does sound more like Mayfair than London. I must say it is also true that there is certain amount of fairy tale in it. You know, she's the queen and she gets into this elaborate gilded carriage and we pretend that she is in a great line group back to Alfred the Great.

But, nevertheless, the fact is that anyone in that tradition knows that there is someone over and above the political structure. They know that when a Watergate or similar event destroys the politicians underneath, the monarch still sits on top. And that, I think, means a great deal. We have a Queen of Canada who does not live here. We therefore have a Governor-General who isn't really Number One. He signs all the legislation though he cannot veto it. He has 10 similar people at the provincial level with similar vague powers. The fact that we allow anyone to have that kind of invisible authority, I think, is extremely important. It is the basic English or British addition to the scene in Canada. We think in these terms, and somehow do not find it odd to do so in a multicultural Canada.

It also means law and order. The fact that something is royal, implies authority. There's the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, for example — although in these particular halls they have been said to be much less or much more than that. For a long time there was the Royal Mail. And while I don't connect the two, I've noticed that, since it became Canada it's hopeless! At least when it was the Royal Mail, if you posted the letter it got there. Now we have reverted to putting it in cleft sticks run with by I don't know who.

But the fact is, that there was a reverence almost, for an authority and for the establishment. Bishop Strachan who founded this university also taught that this establishment should be an Anglican establishment, until he ran head on into Egerton Ryerson, and the tough Baptist was more than a match for the tough Anglican. I make no comment on that, except to say that Ryerson won and, in a sense, we are benefactors of that tradition, and in a sense we are not.

The monarchy and the whole system of authority based on the royal prerogative were the first things that Britain gave to Canada.

The second was the parliamentary tradition. This tradition is operating in this very room we're meeting in. I have been here at debates where there has always been this business of "Mr. Speaker," "My right honorable friend," and so on. That seems forced to some extent. Yet it means that people can really let off at each other. It means that although you can never quite call someone a son-of-a-bitch because the speaker will say that is unparliamentary language and you must withdraw it, the next day you can say "I deny calling him a sonofabitch." Now you've called him so twice! But it is in the rules and nobody decries it.

And that's the thing: the sort of social cement which calls somebody "right honorable" when that person really hasn't been honorable about anything. Indeed, if you went at him with a fine-toothed comb you wouldn't find anything honorable about him at all. Yet you assume he's right honorable until he proves himself different. Then there's the fact that we pay a loyal opposition — notice the wonderful oddness of the phrase "the *loyal* opposition." We hate the government, but we're loyal to the Queen. You can't have a loyal opposition that is loyal to the state, because the state is the government. So that means that instead of having parliamentary committees with teeth as they do in the United States where the congressional committees can be as good as the Sam Ervin Watergate Committee, and as bad as the McCarthy anti-American Activities committee was years ago, we have a loyal opposition.

We also have in the parliamentary system, the fact that everyone who serves in the government must be elected. Now in the United States and in many other systems the cabinet is chosen. Here, if you're going to be a cabinet minister you are going to have to win your seat.

And what is more, from 2 o'clock each day when parliament is in session, whether in Ottawa, Toronto, or Charlottetown, your policies can be interrogated by any member elected from any other part of the country or the province.

Question time and the loyal opposition are a part of a system to elicit information under a series of very controlled circumstances but, by golly, in the end, the job gets done.

That, I think, is the basis on which society here has been built — reverence for authority and flowing from that, this kind of agreement to play within the rules.

Now there are some very strange traditions in England. I was at Cambridge just before and after the war. In those days — and I presume still — those people who were in contravention of university law as opposed to civil law, at night for example, could be stopped by the proctor who was the university policeman.

He was usually a worthy but somewhat doddering professor. So he was accompanied by two people called "bulldogs" one of whom could fight, one of whom could run. They were servants of the colleges hired for that purpose.

If you were caught doing something like being drunk in the street or not wearing the proper dress, one of the worthies would come to you and say: "Are you a member of this university, sir?" And if you were wise you would say, "Yes, sir." "Your name and college, sir?" On one occasion I was with a man called Bunch and he said "Bunch of Keys," — which in fact he was. The bulldog said: "Would you

please speak to the proctor, sir.” And he said “Yes, but I would like to hear the lesson for the day.”

And so the other bulldog, carrying a Bible, unfolded it and in the middle of King’s Parade in Cambridge, read the lesson for the day. It was from Deuteronomy, totally irrelevant, rather boring, and very difficult. When he had finished it, he said: “Now Sir, you are not wearing your academic gown.” “Thank you for reading the lesson, sir.” “Are you wearing a woollen underskirt?” the man asked. “No, sir.” And the proctor said: “Good.”

The next day, the student was fined not only one mark or six shillings and eight pence (which would not be 30 new pence), plus one mark for not wearing academic dress, but also one mark for not wearing a woollen underskirt. This is an offence under an ordinance passed by Edward IV to help the English wool trade. The ordinance has never been repealed.

Now not everywhere is as nutty as Cambridge — not even Oxford! But that kind of thing, that veneration for tradition is very strong. It’s the kind of tradition that is in this university and in all universities. It’s the kind of tradition which venerates age even in a day when, perhaps, age has lost some of the attributes that were once venerated.

For example, such veneration leads a man like Diefenbaker to be concerned when Pearson’s committee designed what was jocularly called at the time the Pearson New Canadian flag. If Diefenbaker had ever lived in Britain, he would have known that the Red Ensign was actually the Red Duster, the Navy’s flag. Anyway at the time the new flag was designed, his poor dewlaps joggled for days and he said he would defend the Red Duster — or Red Ensign.

It’s the kind of thing that you can’t comprehend unless you are British, or unless you understand the British. Why the tremendous emphasis on a tradition which says no gentleman wears brown shoes with a blue suit and that you never wear brown in the city before June?

When I was in the army I went to a military tailor to have my uniform made. Many others went to a cheaper house like Moss Cross of Covent Garden. I was standing on parade in 1942 about to be commissioned and the Colonel came along and he said to the man on my left: “Who made your suit?” The man replied: “Moss Cross.” “Hmrph.” Next man: “Who made your suit?” “Austin Reed, sir.” He grunted at him. He came to me. “Who made your suit?” “Burnham, sir.” “Damn good fit, too. Good luck to you.”



If you were going to die, better not do it in Moss Cross. That's the kind of nutty tradition which is part of the British convention.

There are other things. There's an emphasis on being an amateur — amateur in the sense that you are never really professional at anything except that which you are really professional at. And that you don't admit to. For example, doctors in England who are specialists are never ever referred to as doctors. In other words, only when you've made it in the medical profession do you achieve the status of "Mister." You see, if you are a real professional, you don't want anybody to know, because being real professional, everybody will know about you anyway.

Now it's that kind of thing that is so very important. Another example of this amateurism — the man in the army who says the defence of the country lies in the militia. We have taken this concept into our Canadian folklore because we really believe that the defence of this country has lain in the militia. Now, it has actually always lain in a paid professional army into which the militia was quietly integrated after a lot of hard training, but that does not alter the fact that everybody really believes that it is the militia that has stood between Canada and engulfment.

This idea of course has a lot to do with the size of Canada. As I was saying at the Canadian armed forces school the other day, you have to realize one thing. In Canada, if we were to deploy the whole army, navy, and air force (or as they are now called, the armed forces in the naval, land, and air environment), if we were to deploy them all around this university, we could fend off an attack for maybe 24 hours, as long as our supplies lasted. And that's all, and literally all, that we can protect. Not the whole of Toronto, just the University of Toronto!

So, therefore, we have this mystique. Ah yes, if the chips were down, the rest of the country would rally. For God's sake, if we joined hand to hand we'd only get from Newfoundland to the middle of Quebec! But, still, it's the mystique that's there. A feeling of amateurism.

That leads to another sort of thing — volunteerism. You always believe that the Queen, the politicians, the civil service is each doing its job, but the real work is done by the volunteers. Now that is a common assumption made even in 1975 by some people in this city. I'll not comment further on it. But all I say is it is part of the British tradition.

Again, it is part of the British position to be relatively outward-looking with an inward calm. By that I mean that whereas Germany went around for a great time saying Germans were the master-race, the British did not contradict them because they knew *they* were the master race! So there was no argument, until finally they knew they had to do what they had to do.

The real thing was that the British Empire grew rather like Topsy. It started with trade and then trade had to be protected and the Empire grew into a most extraordinary, complex, often exploitative, entity. It has since sort of shrunk into a commonwealth of equal nations. But all that time this tiny island looked out and said not only "from sea to sea" but, as Flanders and Swann of *The Drop of a Hat* say, "The umpire on whom the sun never sets," going right across the world.

Because of that, always and basically, in the British tradition, not only do we say, "Ho, we run a tight little ship," and not only do you retire home to your tight little ship, but wherever you're set, you "do the job."

I remember that in 1904, a professor came to Queen's University and found that he was to be professor of French. They said: "Well, didn't you know?" He said, "No!" They asked: "What did your teacher say?" He said he had been told he was to be a professor at Queen's. He wasn't quite sure of what subject, but any Oxford man could teach anything! He was indeed fortunate to have been brought up in France — sheer accident which could only happen to an Englishman! He became professor of French and remained so for 52 years.

What I am saying is that he manifested an outward look from an inward sort of self-sufficiency. I think some of that is in Canada too. If, for example, we are racist in this society, it is not in my view perhaps an active racism, but one which one does not think about very much. And one always assumes that other people are happy to be where we live, because we assume that we would be happy to be where they lived, if we were there. We ask: "If they don't like it, why don't they leave?" A very English attitude that, very English! I'm not even sure it isn't Scottish too. Not Irish though, because I'm no so sure that that's not still more complex.

To sum up then, what I'm saying is that over the period of the last 400 or 500 years, there has been an ability to come to terms with the environment, a somewhat harsh and unremitting environment, by means which were first invented by the Indians and Eskimos. The Eskimos are so far away, we don't really consider them part of Canada. But we learned from them. We learned their methods of tool making. We learned their methods of adaptation.

Secondly came the French and with the French came a great organizing skill, a great battle for survival, and also a tremendous concern for the individual, particularly if that individual could be taught to realize that there was one true God and that under Him you could be looked after. You could be taught and cared for if you were sick or well.

Then came the British tradition which has given us the political organism. It

expresses itself upwards in a veneration for authority and outwards in a general feeling that we're all in it together and, although professionalism is not a bad thing, a good volunteer is much better.

Those kinds of things are obviously not all, but it seems to me that you cannot say what a nation like Canada is because, as I have said before, it is not a melting pot. Quebec saw to that. I've often referred to it as a tossed salad with some oil but a good deal more vinegar, it seems to me, with a little salt and sometimes peppery.

But above all, we are a people who are, I think, given both to the French and to the English idea: that here is where we are, if you don't like it, leave it; and if you do like it, become one of us, and we will try to make it easier for you to do so.

## THE CONTROVERSY

*Conclusions drawn from remarks from the crowd over wine and cheese.*

Despite the fact that it dealt effectively with the Indian, the French, and the British roots of Canadian society, Edinborough's address gave rise to a spirited and in some cases hostile debate on three grounds: the somewhat quaint picture of the British that came through; the seemingly much too easy dismissal of the racial issue — at a time when, given a document such as the Green Paper on Immigration, talk about racism was rife; and the insufficient attention paid to the contribution made by the many immigrant groups beside the French and English to the development of Canada.

Let us consider each of these criticisms in turn. First, what might be called the British mystique. The looking outward at things from a position of inward calm. From Edinborough's talk, one did not get the idea that the sort of thing "British" coming out of Britain today was Elton John, Shirley Bassey, Tom Jones, or British Jaguars and fine machinery, but quaint antediluvian Oxford professors and generals who still believed that in an age in which Hiroshima and Vietnam have shown the horrors of atomic bombs and napalm, the cut of a man's uniform was important.

The irony was that Edinborough was far from advocating such misplaced priorities as the cut of uniforms over the immorality of war, but many in the audience seemed to miss the point. In other words, he seemed to them to be advocating the typical 18th or 19th century colonial outlook which had led many to flee Britain seeking freedom and independence in Canada and America.

Secondly, to dismiss the racial issue with one elegantly turned statement was very unwise: "If, for example, we are racist in this society, it is not in my view perhaps an active racism, but one which one does not think about very much and one always assumes that other people are happy to be where we live."

Given the virulent White Power signs that were being painted on walls, the attacks on Sikh temples and Black performers on television, the heated debate, as stated earlier, on the Green Paper on Immigration and its racist implications, one would have had to be extremely detached from current Canadian society to make such a charming statement. Ironically, within less than a month, 500 people, predominantly Black, were attending the funeral of a young Black boy senselessly shot in a fashionable suburban shopping mall, by a white youth who apparently was out to shoot the first Black he saw.

Finally, some members of the audience were incensed because no attention was paid to the contribution of other immigrant groups. Here the planning committee must accept some of the blame, because apparently they had not made sufficiently clear to Edinborough that he was to speak of the Canadian complex and not primarily of British roots of Canadian society.

A fourth point that emerged by implication was that power — political and economic — was tightly in the hands of the British elite and although the time may come when they are outnumbered by Italians or West Indians, numerical strength on the part of immigrants is relatively powerless when confronted with the political and economic strength of a “real” power group.

In its Draft Report on Multiculturalism in the schools, a subcommittee of the Toronto Board of Education said that this was “an unpleasant evening.” This is far from the truth. The address led to a lively debate. One cannot assuage immigrant groups all the time with pleasing platitudes of their presence in Canada. Unintentionally, perhaps, but effectively, Edinborough did not assuage, he challenged.



## Outreach for understanding

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The implications of multiculturalism are far-reaching, going to the very roots of the new society that has come to exist in Canada, or is expected to do so very soon. A massive enquiry into the *bicultural* and *bilingual* nature of Canadian society had been undertaken by the Pearson government, in the early 1960s. By 1971, Prime Minister Trudeau saw Canada not as a bicultural country, but as a multicultural one.

The recognition of this change and the official sanction now given it has not come without trauma. Many Canadians of older stock were brought up on the idea that Canada, while having within its political boundaries people of various immigrant stock, was a country made up of the French and the Anglo-Saxons (for want of a better term,) each of whom (particularly the French) had settled homogeneously in clearly defined regions.

But the new attitudes, if accepted by a majority of Canadians, will mean the opening of a significant chapter in the history of this country.

The idea of a multicultural reality is now recognized in Canada. The New Canadians who came in the late 1940s and early 1950s have settled in and made their impact on all aspects of life in Canada, particularly the big cities. We talked confidently, if condescendingly, about the grand racial mix. But increasingly, new elements of non-Anglo-Saxon heritage and from non-white countries — India, Pakistan, the Caribbean, and Hong Kong — are being added to the mix. To the surface of the seething cauldron has come the word racism, and Canadians are stridently debating in the public arena how racist or not the country is.

Given this setting — and I am not attempting to sensationalize it — one wonders how sincerely the social consciousness has accepted the multicultural idea. We say we hope that present-day Canada is no longer a society of two founding races with the so-called native people on the fringe. We say we hope that Canada is, to some extent, a microcosm of the world with its many peoples. But the fact that multiculturalism is actually here — has that sunk in?

If this is so, that is, if the fact of a culturally pluralistic Canadian society has sunk in, we are still not off the hook, for there remain to be solved the special and pressing stresses and strains that this new cultural pluralism poses. To what extent

are Jamaicans going to be as Jamaican in Canada as they were in Kingston or Montego Bay? The East Indians as they were in Calcutta or Madras? The Chinese as they were in Hong Kong? This is one of the crucial issues in the whole problem of multiculturalism. Does it make sense to argue that in moving from one place to another a person does not give up something in the very moving, whether it is friends, patterns of thought, or ways of doing things?

Indeed, one gives up facets of an old or familiar reality for facets of a new one. And Jamaicans or Chinese from Hong Kong have to learn — note we do not say “have to be *made* to learn” — to see that they cannot be in and of Canada and remain completely steeped in an earlier Jamaican or Hong Kong reality. In other words, the time will and/or must come for them when they realize that Canada is home, and Jamaica or Hong Kong no longer so.

The second issue has to do with the further development of those cultural elements here. This raises the questions of what steps will be taken here to further that development and whose responsibility it will be.

In the popular literature, which is voluminous, writers seem to be saying that it is up to the subcultural group to further the development of its cultural traits here. It seems fair to say that most subcultural groups have been attempting to do so by means of their internally-established institutions.

Sometimes these attempts at further development spill over to the wider public in events such as Caribana or the Italian Day picnic on Centre Island. But this further development should be more than the preservation of the subcultural elements within the ethno-cultural ghetto. It should be a development that is shared with, and moves into the broader Canadian reality. Such would be my view.

A case in point will illustrate. Recently the Jamaica-Canadian society sponsored an exhibition of Jamaican art at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. About 80 per cent of the works on display — painting, sculpture, etc. — had been produced by students of the Jamaica Institute of Fine Arts in Jamaica and had been flown to Canada for display. The remaining 20 per cent was the work of young Jamaicans now resident and painting in Canada.

There was a noticeable difference between the work done by the Jamaican-Jamaicans and the Canadian-Jamaicans. Thematically there were similarities; even in execution there were similarities. Yet the Canadian-Jamaicans seemed to be exploring different avenues from their former compatriots.

I am making two points here — and probably a third. First, neither side was right or wrong for they were both trying to make manifest a reality they had experienced,

and hence both sets of manifestations were valid in their own right. Second, the Canadian-Jamaicans seemed to be exploring and incorporating into their art their new experiences of Canada in much the same way as one would expect those Jamaicans who remained "at home" to discover and explore new experiences in a changing Jamaica. The third point is that if the Canadian government (and people) are sincere about developing further what the immigrant brings, conscious attempts will have to be made to permit the young Jamaican-Canadian to explore his or her ideas in the Canadian setting.

A new responsibility devolves on Canadian-born teachers of art, for example, to help in these new explorations and discoveries. This should start by not bringing about within the student a rejection of his Jamaican roots, but by building on these roots in terms of things Canadian. By the same token, the Jamaican student artist in Canada should not reject the Canadian reality and paint as if he were in Jamaica and only an exile here, but seek, within his Canadian experiences, that which he is attempting to capture in his art.

Needless to say there can be no coercion to go either route. But there will be pain, torture and self-discovery. Those who cannot survive it, will give up their art, or will return to Jamaica, there to paint in a way that is "them." Those who can survive it will stay in Canada, painting in a way that contributes something unique to the treasury of Canadian art.

But these are complex issues which all participants in the situation — whether Jamaican-at-home, Jamaican-in-Canada, Canadian-born art teacher, art buyer, or Canadian taxpaying public — must attempt to understand. This is why the Intercultural Exchange Committee and the Citizenship Bureau (now the Multicultural Development Branch of the Ministry of Culture and Recreation) undertook the series of workshops described in this report. It was an attempt to help all of the participants in the situation in their "outreach for understanding." Our experiences have taught us that the willingness is there, but the reaching out is not a simple task, nor is the understanding easily come by.

It demands not only the goodwill and the spirit of acceptance or tolerance fostered by many voluntary agencies but also specific strategies for training personnel who deliver social goods and services to various communities. These strategies have to be carefully worked out and tested. The Citizenship Branch, and co-sponsor of the activities undertaken by the Intercultural Exchange Committee, has prepared a working paper on the strategies and procedures that it devised for the seminars. The procedures have proved successful and are presented in an appendix as a guide to other groups interested in planning seminars of the type described in this report. It is hoped others will accept the challenge and plan their own seminars.





## Evaluation of the Seminars

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At each seminar, participants were asked to respond to two questions by way of evaluation: (a) What did you like about the seminar, and (b) What is it that you did not like about the seminar? There was little difference, except in minor details, among the criticisms which were made. The following comments have proved most helpful to us as sponsors of the workshops, and they were also the ones made most frequently.

### POSITIVE COMMENTS

- The opportunity to learn about the background of a particular group of citizens — how they see themselves and the goals that they set for themselves. Difficulties as we (the non-ethnic) see them are easier to overcome when we understand why the Canadians from other countries act and think as they do.
- The apparent genuine effort being made to help the new Canadian and the honesty and forthrightness in questions and answers. In other words, the forthright approach to existing problems.
- It is an excellent way of communicating with the minorities. The professional workers have a great chance to have first-hand information about the immigrant problems. Congratulations!
- I am amazed that such a number of workers are struggling with issues that I thought were the worries of only my colleagues and me. It made it “real” for me to meet face to face with some people who are working toward similar goals.
- The concept of heightening cultural awareness is excellent and successfully achieved through these seminars. The dramatic allayment of xenophobic tendencies realized through such efforts is of paramount importance to a metropolis such as Toronto. I should like to see more people benefiting from such experiences.
- The excellent selection of speakers with many to-the-point facts and ideas. The workshops — good content and nitty-gritty discussion.
- The personal experience and honesty were valid. Provocative! Informative! I found it rewarding.

- Excellent idea. Seminars like this should be on-going, with the objective of sensitizing people in the helping services to an understanding of minority populations and cultural differences.
- The whole concept is a tremendously valuable one. It brings into better focus the question of assimilation and the responsibility of the immigrants to decide how much they want to be assimilated. I became very much aware of the varying opinions within each immigrant group about this matter.
- I gathered a lot of insights into the structural and immigration patterns of the community. They will help me appreciate more fully the problems of the children I deal with.

Several respondents commented positively on the format and other aspects of the program. A list such as the foregoing can give rise to a sense of euphoria in the all-too-human members of the Committee and the Citizenship Bureau, were it not for sobering succinct comments such as this one: "I fully enjoyed the symposium but did not feel I got what I came for. We only scratched the surface!"

### **NEGATIVE COMMENTS**

While the negative comments were markedly fewer than the positive and dealt more with details of planning such as poor acoustics of buildings and hurried time-tables, several of them were no less penetrating than the positive criticisms. The following are representative:

- Too many areas were covered in the discussions. Workshop groups should be set up according to common interests.
- Too much ground to cover with too little discussion. For example, we spent all of our time on education only.
- Need for greater representation from the community. Where were the members of the working class, the single parents, the youth, the immigrants themselves?
- Too many lower-echelon school and social service people. We were not putting the case to the senior decision makers. There is need for much change within the system.
- Too much talk on the macrolevel and not enough concrete and substantial measures being taken to improve the effectiveness of the service delivery acceptable to the immigrants.
- Too much generalization. No facts or statistics, very little specific to the (given)

community. At least, most of what I heard could be directed at immigrants from any country.

- Most of the talks were far too general, vague and cliché-ridden.
- Did not concentrate on what actions could be taken.
- The lack of suggestions as to what community and/or professional workers can do to help with the issues and problems brought forth.
- For too many years, all kinds of group conferences have dealt *ad nauseum* with “the problems.” There is more than enough material describing these, if people could come to the workshop a little prepared. I think it is time we moved into the area of solutions, not in an abstract intellectual way, but along some concrete lines, however small they may be.

How do the Committee and the Bureau appraise its activities? Needless to say they have paid a great deal of attention to the criticisms of participants. They have considered not only the positive ones (which always encourage) but the negative ones too, many of which they have attempted to eliminate as they proceeded from one workshop to another. But perhaps the negative criticism that has caused the co-sponsors the greatest soul-searching is the one that has to do with lack of action or recommendations for the solution of problems.

To understand the issue, one must return to two salient points: the membership of the Intercultural Exchange Committee and its relationship with the Citizenship Bureau (now the Multicultural Development Branch) of the Ministry of Culture and Recreation.

The Intercultural Exchange Committee is in effect an *ad hoc* group of interested individuals with extensive experience in the field of immigrants and immigrant issues, plus a solid foundation in and knowledge of Canadian Society. So the committee has always made its modest aim, not the formulation and/or implementation of recommendations of solution to problems, but the bringing together of those who deliver social services to the ethnic communities and those who receive them so that they may better understand each other.

On its part, the Multicultural Development Branch is concerned that all elements of the community should be strongly linked, in every sense, to the mainstream of society. It is concerned with promoting a fully-integrated society in which opportunity for all flourishes and with promoting cultural diversity in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance. In other words, in the view of the Multicultural Development Branch it should be possible for the individual, while retaining his

own culture, to adapt himself to, and be accepted as a permanent member of, the majority society in all the external aspects of association. He enjoys full political, civil and social rights, performs all the obligations to society as an equal citizen, but, if he chooses, remains a member of a separate community with close links with others.

This view advocates the concept of the coexistence and acceptance of a multitude of cultures within an integrated society.

This integrated society which the Multicultural Development Branch envisages demands a process of mutual adjustment. It envisages co-operative resolution of problems through interaction within the main areas of relationships-legal, socio-cultural and economic between the "majority" and the "minority" on one hand, and among the minorities themselves on the other.

The primary method for achieving mutual adjustment and co-operative resolution is to encourage greater interaction among groups, specifically aimed at righting the inequalities that are associated with differentiation. The primary responsibility of the branch in this process of integration is to encourage and facilitate this interaction in as precise, direct and effective a manner as possible.

It is in this context that the Intercultural Exchange Committee with the support of the Multicultural Development Branch embarked upon the series of workshops described in this report.

If we in Ontario are to have a society with equal rights and opportunities and one that truly reflects the multicultural character of our people, and if individuals are to participate fully in community life in an atmosphere of understanding and acceptance, it is incumbent on all sectors to pursue this goal. Each of us, within our neighborhood, and within our professional associations, must work toward the resolution of problems and issues that inhibit the ideal of a more harmonious, equitable and dynamic society. In such a society, the supreme goal will be full and equal citizenship for all its members. The intercultural neighborhood workshops and this publication are seen as aids in the pursuit of such a goal.



## Guidelines for conducting intercultural seminars

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### Introduction

The Multicultural Development Branch regards as one of its main functions the promotion of intercommunication and understanding among the people of many different cultural backgrounds who live within its borders. The various traditions, habits and customs of all these people enrich and enliven our society. They are encouraged to preserve them, but, if they are to participate actively in the daily life and community affairs of this democratic society on equal terms with other citizens, there must be communication and co-operation among all groups. The basis of communication and co-operation is understanding.

It has always been apparent to established Canadians that immigrants must be helped to understand the new society. Voluntary associations have been active in establishing language classes and in using various means of orienting newcomers to the Canadian environment. For several years the Ontario Citizenship Branch has been conducting a reception service at the points of entry. It also has an active orientation program for immigrants, through TV, radio and printed material presented in different languages. It offers short-term night courses for new arrivals in their own language. Classes in English as a second language are held and there is an accompanying publication, *Newcomer News*, a bi-monthly news sheet in simple English.

### Why Intercultural Seminars?

Integration, however, if it is meant seriously, involves a two-way process, a process of interaction. It has to be admitted that, generally, Canadians have been extremely slow to recognize that they are very lacking in their knowledge and understanding of the background of the immigrants. It is true that they can and do attend ethnic folk festivals with displays of folk art, handicrafts, folk dancing and gymnastics. They have learned to enjoy many new types of food introduced to them in ethnic restaurants. The news media present interesting aspects of the life of various ethnic groups in Canada. All this is useful but it does not acquaint members of the host society with the severe and sometimes tragic problems suffered by immigrants because people who serve them in government offices, schools, hospitals, and places of employment do not understand their traditions and their way of life. Professional and high-skilled workers have their problems, usually in relation to entering the occupations for which they have trained, but otherwise are able to adapt fairly easily to the modern, urban, technological

society. It is the less sophisticated people from rural societies who suffer most and these comprise a large proportion of the immigrant population.

A teacher, out of kindness, keeps a newly-arrived eight-year-old after school each evening to help her with English. She does not know that the child gets a beating at home each evening from a grandmother who is caring for her and has never known children to be kept after school except for misbehavior.

An old lady in a hospital refuses to eat. She pitches the food which is brought her at the walls and medical staff start to believe that she is mentally disturbed. Through an interpreter it is discovered that she is extremely angry because her headcovering has been taken away from her and it is a dishonor for her to have her head uncovered, even in bed.

A group of young men congregate on the street in the evening. A policeman tells them to "move along" and "break it up." They are not aware of any wrongdoing. They come from a warm country where few people can afford expensive leisure-time activities. They have been accustomed to passing the time by talking together on the street.

Mothers at a well-baby clinic complain that their babies are allergic to orange juice. The nurse, through an interpreter, advises tomato juice. Neither the interpreter nor the mothers are familiar with tomato juice in their eating habits but they use much tomato paste, similar to ketchup. On the next clinic day, there are sick babies and angry mothers.

A day nursery and evening babysitting program is located in the midst of an immigrant area and the immigrants do not use the service. The municipal recreation department officials think it offers an excellent program and cannot understand why immigrant taxpayers do not participate in it. It has not occurred to them that these immigrants are not interested in hockey, basketball or handicrafts and that their women are not permitted by tradition to attend evening activities except when accompanied by male relatives.

The seminars described in the preceding chapters were aimed at a broad sector of the community — schools, hospitals, clinics, social agencies, police. Also at government departments dealing with employment, unemployment insurance, workmen's compensation, social services, public health, human rights, apprenticeship, aging and others. Since then there have been requests for similar seminars in other ethnic communities and in other geographical locations. There have also been requests for assistance in providing consultation, personnel and resource material for professional development days in schools. A government department has asked for the names of persons in ethnic groups who can inform staff about

problems of aging in their communities. A hospital has asked for a speaker to discuss with its staff the problems of immigrants in using health services. In one area a plan has been formed to bring together staff from several schools for a workshop after school hours from 3.30 - 9.00 p.m.

Much more needs to be done and probably there needs to be experimentation with other types of programs. The Multicultural Development Branch is not equipped to conduct all the intercultural programs needed across the province. It is hoped that community organizations and institutions will initiate similar activities. The Branch is ready to provide consultative service, based on its experience in working with immigrants in this and other programs. It has many contacts in ethnic areas and is able to suggest the names of individuals in ethnic communities who can serve as resource people. It is collecting a variety of material regarding ethnic communities in written form, on tape and slides. These will be available on request.

### **PLANNING A SERIES OF NEIGHBORHOOD INTERCULTURAL SEMINARS**

The seminars conducted by the Multicultural Development Branch were generally located in a neighborhood where a large proportion of residents belonged to one ethnic group. Invitations were sent to persons in that neighborhood who met immigrants in their daily work — teachers, social workers, public health nurses, staffs of hospitals and clinics, workers in government offices, police, clergy, and other interested persons. As the purpose was to provide information to these community workers, those who presented the information through the program were members of the ethnic group. There also had to be enough members of the ethnic group present to provide intercommunication in small discussion groups. These general steps proved extremely important.

If a broadly-based community organization, such as a social-planning council, wishes to plan a series of seminars, an over-all steering committee will be needed to guide and evaluate the program. Members of the committee should preferably be persons with some experience in conducting community programs, some understanding of immigrant groups and with a knowledge of how Canadian society operates.

If only one seminar is planned, either in a small community or in a local area in a larger city, only a local planning committee will be needed.

### **Choosing a location**

In a city with a heavy ethnic population there is usually no difficulty identifying a neighborhood in which there is a large proportion of people from one ethnic group. In a more scattered area, such as one of the boroughs of Metropolitan Toronto or

in smaller urban areas where there is a somewhat even representation of different ethnic groups, this will be more difficult. It will probably be necessary to draw from a wider geographical area. There are, however, some sources of information that can give a great deal of help. School registration usually gives a good indication of immigrant concentrations. Publishers of ethnic newspapers can locate their fellow countrymen from their circulation lists. Banks know who their customers are and where they live.

### **The planning committee**

Once the geographical location is decided, a planning committee can be selected from persons living or working in that neighborhood.

Obviously the committee should be composed of members of the established community and members of the ethnic group.

Members of the established community may be chosen from staffs of schools, social agencies, health organizations or other community organizations. They may include interested and competent citizens from any area such as a housewife, a banker, a grocer. This part of the committee will have contacts in the old Canadian community, will know how to reach them, will be aware of what information they need, and what type of program will attract them.

Members of the ethnic community should be chosen *as individuals* for the input they can provide. Asking an ethnic organization to send a representative is risky. They may choose an outstanding and respected member of their group who may nevertheless be a poor committee member. Some ethnic communities have strong divisions within them based on politics, religion, or regional areas in their own country.

Sometimes groups which claim to represent their total community in fact do not. If the co-operation of one group is invited others may be alienated.

It is important to get committee members from those ethnic organizations who maintain a fairly neutral position and are able to co-operate with various sub-groups in their own community. Open hostility, though a possibility, is unlikely, because ethnic groups wish to present a good image to Canadians. It is important, however, that the committee members are able to work with each other comfortably. An effective committee should be limited to eight, or, at the most, 10 members. A large committee becomes an inefficient one as more participants talk more and make the process longer. Once the planning is under way, it is inadvisable to admit new members. They have to be oriented, otherwise they present new ideas for consideration which, however commendable, will retard progress.



## **The chairman**

The chairman of the planning committee will likely be a member of the body organizing the seminar. If, for any reason, another chairman is chosen, he or she should be added temporarily to that body in order to report to and keep in touch with the sponsoring group. It is advisable that the chairman of the planning committee also acts as chairman of the seminar, in order to maintain continuity.

If a member of the ethnic group is chosen as chairman, he or she should be a person acceptable to the total ethnic group and well acquainted with Canadian society.

## **The co-ordinator**

The co-ordinator should be an employee of the organizing body unless this is a small group dependant on volunteers. He or she should have skill in organizing, the ability to work with people, the capacity for forethought in planning and meeting deadlines.

The functions of the co-ordinator are:

- to bring together a planning committee;
- to work with the chairman on planning agenda;
- to prepare and distribute minutes of the planning committee;
- to explore possibilities for accommodation and report these to the committee;
- to prepare promotion and publicity material;
- to handle registrations;
- to plan for physical arrangements for the seminar;
- to prepare a report, if there is a decision to issue one.

## **Working with ethnic groups**

All planning committees are different from each other, but, when working with ethnic groups it is well to be aware that they come from different backgrounds and will approach this process differently. Some, particularly those with a British or American orientation, come from democratic societies with institutions similar to Canadian ones. They are quite accustomed to conferences and this type of committee work. Others came from countries where freedom of assembly is not permitted. The very idea of a committee may be strange to them unless they have been in Canada for some time and have participated in similar activities before. At the first committee meeting, for instance, some members may offer to speak on certain topics simply because they assume they have been invited to the committee because they are expected to be speakers. They may not be accustomed to planning committees, or to committees of any kind. There are indeed, adult native-born Canadians who have never participated in committee work.

The organizing group will have to search out ethnic members for the committee from people they know. People receiving invitations may be unfamiliar with the

organizing body and may need some reassurance that it is a viable organization with a good reputation in the community. It is helpful for them to have a verbal invitation from someone they know. This should be followed by a written invitation from the organizing body which makes the invitation official. This letter should state clearly what the duties of the committee will be and how much time it will require.

Members of a group which come from an authoritarian society may accept without question the opinions of the other committee members and especially those of the chairman. Or, if they are young people from a society where the wisdom of age is much more highly regarded than that of youth, they may be hesitant about expressing opinions and may have to be drawn out. On the other hand, members from an ethnic group which has suffered long from being delegated to a position of inferiority will likely be very anxious that its voice be heard and that the program be what they wish it to be.

### **Functions of the planning committee**

The planning committee will have responsibility for:

- deciding the date of the seminar;
- choosing the accommodation;
- planning the program and the method of presentation and the schedule;
- choosing the participants in the program;
- making suggestions for group discussion, leaders, recorders and resource people from the ethnic group.

### **Choosing a date and time**

It is wise to allow three months for planning. From four to six planning meetings will probably be needed. It is not feasible to hold a seminar in July or August because of the conflict with vacations. June and September are very busy for teachers and also for some other organizations. May is a month when there may be annual meetings and conferences, but it is still a possibility. Allowance also has to be made for Christmas holidays and spring school vacation.

In smaller communities where one's residence and one's place of employment are not too far apart, Saturday may be a suitable day for a seminar, but, generally speaking, a week-day is more advisable. Saturday may attract only the deeply committed, and those who are less interested may be the very persons the planning committee is most anxious to reach. A day which takes one away from the usual place of work and can yet be regarded as a work-day can be quite attractive. The committee may wish to consider holding the seminar on an evening and the following day, or if it is confined to one professional group or the staff of one organization or institution, an after-work seminar for a few hours, with dinner provided, may be feasible.

### **Choosing accommodation**

The building chosen for the seminar should be located in the neighborhood for which the seminar has been planned, accessible by public transportation and with good parking facilities. It should have an auditorium, with good acoustics, large enough to accommodate the number of participants expected and with enough small rooms for discussion groups if these are planned. A gymnasium is inclined to have an echo.

A public address system is likely to be required.

It will be necessary to check smoking regulations and the facilities for registration, coat checking and serving of food. The cost must also be considered in budgeting for the conference.

Churches are available during the week and usually have the necessary accommodation but some of them have very strict regulations regarding smoking.

An ethnic centre may be suitable if it is in the right neighborhood location and has the kind of space required, but it must be a location acceptable to the total ethnic group.

### **Program**

The usual pattern for seminars of this kind is a combination of addresses or panel presentations, discussion from the floor and small group discussions. This can be varied by the use of audio-visual aids and skits. However, some ethnic groups will feel quite uncomfortable about participating in skits and will prefer more academic presentations.

There is no lack of topics for discussion. The difficulty is to choose among them. Too many speeches get very tiring. Four is probably the ideal number, two in the morning and two in the afternoon. As the main purpose and the most vital objective of this exercise is to inform the host society about the newcomers, it is very important that there be plenty of communication between the two groups. The small group discussion gives more people more opportunity to talk.

The program should be flexible, however. If time is pressing, discussion from the floor may be curtailed or eliminated in favor of more time for small discussion groups. On the other hand, if there is a very exciting floor discussion with apparent interest on the part of all participants, and, if the hour is growing late, the audience may be disappointed if the discussion is cut off in order to maintain the time schedule. A good chairman will sense this, and ask a quick decision from the audience as to how the time should be used.

Topics chosen at seminars have been an overview of the ethnic group in the new community, its family life, education, health services, employment, socio-economic problems and the law. Small discussion groups may be general or specialized, relating to the specific topics which have been presented. If the latter pattern is chosen, participants should be asked to specify their preference on their application forms.

### **Choosing the participants**

The program, of course, is presented by members of the ethnic group. Those making the presentations should be knowledgeable about the subject and fluent in English. The committee will have to depend on members of the ethnic group for recommending speakers or panel participants. The image of the ethnic group is enhanced by persons who make competent, articulate presentations.

There may be suggestions that non-professionals such as manual laborers or housewives should make presentations or that interviews should be conducted with them as part of the program, even if this means using an interpreter. It is argued that they, and not professional people, are the ones who have most adjustment problems resulting from their different cultural background. Some feel that they will present situations more dramatically if they are still too new to have learned the language and their problems are still vivid to them. Unfortunately, they are usually unable to make public presentations and often very fearful of appearing in public at all. Interpretation doubles the time period needed, which is usually too short in any case. If this sort of direct input is desired, some interviews might be presented on film or videotape, with English dubbed in.

### **The resource people**

Getting a good representation from the ethnic group is very important. The proportion should probably be about one in four. This will provide three for a small discussion group of 10 or 12 people. Quite apart from their value in providing information is the matter of giving an opportunity for social interaction. Teachers meet the ethnic group only as parents. Social workers and government officials see those who have problems. Health workers encounter those with illnesses. Here they meet them informally in the discussion group, at lunch time and coffee time. Getting acquainted with people of other cultural groups is one of the best ways of breaking down prejudices and learning to appreciate each other.

The planning committee will have to depend on members of the ethnic group to suggest names of possible resource people. They should be persons who speak English fairly well. It may be hard to find resource people who are free to be absent from their work and employers may have to be approached by the co-ordinator to ask to have them released. Some employers in government departments, hospitals, clinics and social agencies are quite co-operative. It is more difficult for



schools to release teachers because substitutes must be procured and paid for, but, in some cases, such arrangements can be made.

Secondary school students often make excellent resource people and school principals are co-operative about excusing them on request. The students are in the middle of the culture conflict between the old society and the new and in an excellent place to see and interpret both. However, it may be that the planning committee members from the ethnic group will not be too receptive to this idea but will prefer to be represented by more mature people.

Resource people will need to feel that the organizing group is a reputable one and should know exactly what is expected of them. Some of them may have little or no experience with conferences or discussion groups. They should know that they are not expected to make speeches, but will be expected to speak freely and informally at any time to provide information to others. They should be recognized and identified by the group discussion leader at the beginning of the discussion period so they will feel more comfortable about speaking up without being called on.

They will probably respond more readily to an invitation from someone they know. It may be difficult for committee members to find time to call them.

In any case, they should receive an official letter of invitation, outlining clearly what is expected of them. They should be asked to telephone or make a personal call for clarification if they wish.

### **Group discussion leaders**

Group discussion leaders are expected to:

- get the discussion started;
- keep the discussion on topic;
- control those who talk too much and encourage those who are too silent;
- refrain from participating too much in the discussion; their job is to get others to do it;
- sum up the discussion near the end of the period.

Leaders may be chosen from the ethnic group or from outside it. Because good resource people from the ethnic group are sometimes hard to find, it seems a pity to use too many of them as discussion leaders where they have less opportunity to contribute. On the other hand, it may be wise to demonstrate that there is good leadership ability within the group.

### **Recording and recorders**

There are two methods of recording by the use of tape recorders and by having individuals do the recording.

There are advantages to using a tape recorder.

- The total record is available.
- It eliminates the trouble of appointing recorders and collecting reports from them afterward.

There are also advantages to using personal recorders.

- Some people feel uncomfortable about speaking into a tape recorder.
- Taking material from the tape and condensing it is a very time-consuming process. Recordings done by people are already condensed.
- Tape recorders are unpredictable. They may break down. Tapes run out. There may not be enough outlets or they may not fit. If acoustics are poor, the tape is not usable.

Finding people to do the recording is difficult if the organizers are not acquainted with the participants. Often, the group discussion leader must ask for volunteers or specifically ask a member of the discussion group to do it.

Members of the ethnic group must not be used for this. It does not leave them enough time to participate, and some may find it difficult to function this way in English.

The planning committee may decide to have discussion leaders or recorders report individually directly to the final plenary session. This may be time-consuming and repetitive, depending on the number of groups. It is a good idea to limit the reporters to listing three or four salient points from the discussion. Another approach is to have groups list the main points from their discussion in large letters on newsprint and tack these up in a conspicuous place after the morning sessions. There may or may not be time at the end of the day.

Reporters should be reminded by the chairman to leave their notes at the registration desk or to send them to the co-ordinator as soon as possible.

As these seminars are merely for the purpose of informing, no recommendations are asked for or voted on.

### **The time schedule**

A one-day workshop may begin at 9.00 or 9.30 a.m. with registration and coffee. If an hour or hour-and-a-half is allowed for lunch, participants are usually ready to quit around 3.30 or 4.00 p.m.

### **Meals**

One of the highlights of the seminar is the ethnic meal. Those unaccustomed to it enjoy the variety and it makes a good conversation piece to begin talking with a

stranger. If the organizing group decides on an evening and a day for their seminar they can begin with a meal in the evening and serve a lunch the following day.

The simplest way of serving a meal is to order it from an ethnic restaurant and serve it with paper plates and cups and plastic utensils. A formal sit-down meal should be avoided. A pick-up one allows people to move about and socialize.

Beginning the day with coffee gives some people time to socialize while others are being registered and settled.

### **Promotion**

Invitations should go out at least three weeks in advance. It is important to get as many “front line” people at the conference as possible. These are people who deal directly with the immigrant — the government employee who meets them across the counter, the class-room teacher, the ward nurse in the hospital, the case-work counsellor in a social agency.

It is important, however, to include administrative personnel as well. They are the initiators of programs in their own departments. If they are enthusiastic about the seminar they will be anxious that their staff be present at a similar future one. In any case, they must be approached to ask that their staff be permitted to attend. Letters describing the purpose of the seminar and including a brochure and application form should be sent to heads of government departments, school area superintendents, social agencies, and voluntary organizations with a staff of several people.

The brochure should be attractive but, if cost is a factor, it need not be slick. It should contain the schedule, including topics, the date, place, and cost. Usually the application or registration form can be a part of the brochure, to be torn off and mailed.

If there is a danger of over-registration, a time limit should be specified or a statement that registrations will be accepted in the order in which they are received.

### **Publicity**

The planning committee will have to decide whether or not it wants publicity. Publicity before the event is not recommended because the seminar is planned for specific groups and it may attract others who register first and use up the available space.

Whether or not reporters of the seminar in the media are desirable will depend on the specific circumstances. The organizing body may want publicity for itself or for the cause. However, it should be borne in mind that, if conflicts arise in the dis-

cussions, it is this that is likely to get the attention, which would negate the purpose of building harmonious relations between groups.

### **Displays and kits**

Kits containing bibliographies and copies of addresses which give information about the ethnic group are useful to participants. The local library will probably be happy to do a book display. Arranging for displays by ethnic organizations may cause difficulties. Which organizations should be asked? Will some organizations include material which is not acceptable to others?

### **Registration**

If there is uncertainty about the number of registrants it is wise to ask that the registration fee including the meal be enclosed with the registration form. This involves quite a lot of work before the seminar, but means people must commit themselves and it saves taking money at the door. Programs should be available for all registrants.

Because names of persons of other nationalities are sometimes difficult to understand, these should be clearly written, preferably typed, on name tags.

The name tags, meal tickets, and the number of the registrant's discussion group can be attached to the program or included in the kit. Having kits or programs arranged in alphabetical order at the registration desk saves time.

### **Physical arrangements**

A check should be made beforehand to ensure that there are enough ashtrays, that the public address system is in working order, that the coffee equipment is on hand and working, that coat-checking arrangements are available.

Rooms for small discussion groups should be numbered. The location of each should be given to the chairman in written form so he can give directions to participants when it is time to move into this part of the program.

### **After the conference**

The organization which provides the accommodation will appreciate it if all equipment is picked up as soon as possible and the hall left in good order.

### **Conference evaluation**

Simple evaluation sheets can be provided with the kit asking participants for comments regarding the program.

The planning committee may wish to have an evaluation session, particularly if they are planning any follow-up activity.



As a matter of courtesy, thank-you letters are sent to program participants and others who devoted any special effort to the success of the seminar.

The planning committee may decide to send a report of the seminar to organizations represented, or to all participants. If this is done, it is the task of the co-ordinator to collect the information, write the report and see that it is distributed.



# Intercultural Exchange Committee

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